

Not for sale

A
COMMENTARIE
ON THE WHOLE
EPISTLE TO THE
HEBREWS.

By
M. IOHN CALVIN.
TRANSLATED OVT OF
FRENCH.

*The lawe was giuen by Moses, but grace and truth came
by Iesus Christ. Iohn 1.17.*



Imprinted at London by FELIX KINGSTON, for
Arthur Iohnson; and are to be sold at his shop neere
the great North doore of Pauls, at the
signe of the white Horse.

1605.

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by Jesus Christ. John 1. 17.

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TO THE RIGHT

HONOURABLE ROBERT
EARLE OF SALISBURY, VICOVNT

Cranbourne, Baron of Effendon, Principall Secreta-

rie to the Kings most excellent Maiestie, Ma-

ster of the Court of Wardes and Liue-

ries, and one of his Highnesse

most Honourable Pri-

uie Counsell.

Grace and peace be multiplied.



Right Honourable, such
hath beene the singular
care and fatherly proui-
dence of God ouer his
church in these last times:
that according to his
own most gracious promise (through the
meanes of preaching and writing) know-
ledge hath ouerflowed in all places, as the Egi, II. 9.
waters that couer the sea. Hence it is come
to passe, that euen this nation also, albeit
vtterly vnworthy to receiue so much as

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the least sprincklings of this knowledge; hath notwithstanding beene replenished and filled therewith, almost from corner to corner. Many chosen and worthy instruments hath the Lord raised vp here & there for this purpose. But amongst the rest, none for whom there is greater cause of thankfulness, than for that rare & excellent light of this age, *Mr. Calvin*: whether in respect of the large and many volumes, which with vnweariable paines hee hath written, or the exceeding fruite which the Churches haue thereby gained. So that all of sound iudgement wil acknowledge, that God had poured out vpon him a principall portion and measure of his spirit to profit withall, 1. Cor. 12.7. Wherof, as his whole worksgive sufficient prooffe, so his Cōmētaries especially. For besides his sinceritie and faithfulness in deliuering the true and naturall sense of the holy Scriptures; hee hath this as peculiar to himselfe, that with his faithfulness and sinceritie hee alwaies matcheth an exceeding plainenesse and breuitie: whereby his Reader may obtaine that hee seekes, both with
great

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great ease, and with very litle losse of time.

Diuers of these his Commentaries, Right Honourable, haue bene alreadie translated to the great benefit of this nation: others yet remaine vntertranslated, which doubtlesse would be no lesse beneficiall. The which, as I haue earnestly desired; so, had gifts and meanes beene in any measure answerable, it had beene performed ere this. For the present, I haue beene bold to giue your Honor a small taste thereof in these my poore first fruites: wherein although my paines are no way sufficient to commend the same vnto your Honour, yet I doubt not but the matter it selfe will be found worthy of your H. patronage. For where are the natures and offices of Christ so largely described; the doctrine of the free remission of sinnes in Christs blood better established, or faith with her effects more highly commended; than in this Epistle to the Hebrewes?

Now as touching the reasons, Right Honourable, that haue moued me hereunto, they are briefly these; First, I was not ignorant what singular loue and affection your

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Honor beare to the author of this Commē-
tarie for his workes sake, whereof many al-
so are witnesses. Vnto which, if your Honor
should be pleased to adde a second fauour
in Patronizing these his labours, I thought
it would be a speciall meanes to reuiue his
memorie againe, now almost decayed a-
mongst vs.

Secondly, I was perswaded that if your
Lordship, whom it hath pleased th'Almigh-
tie so highly to aduance, being also a fauou-
rer and defender of the trueth, and of all
good causes; would permit this worke to
passe vnder your Honours protection: that
it would bee both better esteemed, and the
more acceptably receiued of all.

Lastly, my good Lord, as I cannot con-
ceale that deep and inward affection of loue
and dutie which I owe vnto your Honour,
in regard of the neere employments which
sometimes a deere friend of mine had about
your Lordship in your young yeares: so by
this dedication it was my desire to testifie
part of a thankfull minde, in respect that
you haue not suffered neither length of
time,

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time, nor your H waightie affairs in matters of state, to weare the same out of your Honourable remembrance: as by the great fauours your H. hath lately shewed in that behalfe, doth plainly appeare.

Thus in most humble manner crauing pardon for my great boldnesse, I humbly end; beseeching the most high God, possessor of heauen and earth, to powre out the abundance of all blessings both vpon you and yours in this life, and to crown your H. and them with immortall blessednesse in his kingdome of glorie, through Christ.

*Your Honours in all humble
and dutifull affection,
euer to bee commanded,*

CLEMENT COTTON.

TO THE READER.



Eare Christian Reader, among the many helpes wherewith God hath furnished thee for the furtherance of thy godly Meditations and spiritual growth in Christ, I pray thee accept of this amongst the rest; of which (if I may so speake) thou hast bene too long unfurnished. Diuers good and godly men have laboured, some by their own writings, and some againe by translating the workes of others, to store thee with Sermons and Expositions in English, vpon all the bookes of the New Testament, this Epistle to the Hebrewes onely excepted: which lacke, rather than it should be vn supplied, hath caused me (the vnfittest I confesse of many thousands) to undertake the translation of the Commentarie ensuing: which beeing finished, I have bene bolde (for thy benefit Christian Reader) now to publish. Hoping therefore of thy friendly allowance and acceptance of these my poore indeauours: I beseech thee, if thou reapest that benefit thereby, which I heartily wish thou maist, to giue God the praise, and to helpe me with thy praiers. Thus commending thee and thy studies to the grace of God, I bidde thee farewell.

Thine euer in Christ,

C. C.



THE ARGUMENT ON THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.



Here haue beene diuers opinions in times past, not onely touching the Authors name of this Epistle: but also euen the Epistle it self hath bin receiued with much adoe; and that very lately amongst them of the Latine churches. They had it in suspition, as if it favoured the error of Nouatus, touching the deniall of pardon vnto those which fell backe againe into sinne: but when we shall come to those places where this matter is spoken of, we will shew that this their suspition was causelesse. Nowe for mine owne part, I doe receiue it without any difficultie at all amongst the Apostolicall Epistles; and doe make no doubt but that it came to passe by the craft and subtiltie of the Diuell, that there haue beene some heretofore which haue indeauoured to cut off this Epistle from the number of the Canonickall Bookes. For there is no booke in all the holy Scripture, which more clearely, or liuely speaketh of the Priest-hood of Christ: neither yet any which doth more highly extoll the dignitie, and vertue of his onely Sacrifice, the which he hath offered vp by his death: neither is there any booke which handleth more fully, both the vse and the abrogating of Ceremonies: In a word, none which instructeth vs better, that Christ is the ende of the Lawe. Let vs not then by any means suffer that the Church of God and we with it, should be deprived of so great a benefit: but on the contrarie, let vs hold it fast, and carefully keepe it. Nowe

we neede not much busie our selues in standing to discusse who was the Author of it, some haue thought that S. Paul was the Author of it; some others S. Luke; others Barnabas, and others Clement; as S. Hierome declareth. Although Eusebius in the sixth booke of the Ecclesiasticall historie, maketh mention but of S. Luke and Clement. I know very well that since Chrysostoms time, it hath beene wholly receined of the Greekes amongst the Epistles of S. Paul: but the Latines were of another opinion, euen amongst those which were nearest to the times of the Apostles. To speake what I thinke, I cannot beelene that S. Paul was the Author of it. For there is no great likelihood, to say as some doe, that he suppressed his name of set purpose, because it was odious and hateful among the Iewes. And if this had beene so, why then should he make mention of Timothy? for by this onely word he had discovered himselfe, and had laid himselfe open sufficiently to their knowledge.

Contrariwise, the manner of teaching, as also his style, doth giue apparant testimonie that it was not of S. Pauls writing, but of some other mans doing: for he which wrote it, confesseth in the second Chapter, that he was one of the Disciples of the Apostles: now this is very farre off from Saint Pauls manner of speech. Moreover the vse and custome of the Catechisme, which he toucheth in the sixth Chapter, cannot properly agree to Saint Pauls time. There are also other reasons, which we will touch when we shall come to the places that giue occasion thereof. I know the excuse very well which some are wont to bring touching the style; to wit, that the difference thereof doth giue no sufficient ground to stay our iudgements upon, because that S. Luk, or some other did translate this Epistle out of the Hebrew tongue into the Greeke. But it is easie to refute this their coniecture. I willingly let passe other places which are alleadged out of the Scripture: onely I say, that if this Epistle had beene written in Hebrew, there could not haue beene an allusion in this word Testament, whereupon the author of this Epistle doth stay himselfe. I say then, that which he handleth touching the nature of the Testament in the ninth Chapter, cannot be drawne out of any other fountaine then from the Greeke word.

word signifieth two things, to wit, Testament, and Couenant: but Berith after the Hebrewes, signifieth Couenant onely. This reason will satisfie those that are of sound iudgement to prooue that which I haue said: to wit, that this Epistle was written in the Greeke tongue. As touching that which is brought to the contrary, that it is more probable that the Apostle would not write to the Iewes but in their owne tongue, this hath no more ground then the rest. How few were then to be found which vnderstood the language of their auncestours? Againe, according to the region where euery one dwelt, so had he also learned the language of the same. Now the Greeke tongue was spread furthest abroad, and was more in use then any other. I therefore come now to the Argument it selfe.

First we haue to obserue that the point whereat the Apostle aimeth, is not to perswade the Iewes, that Iesus the sonne of Mariæ, was the Christ, and the Redeemer which had beene promised them. For in as much as he wrote vnto them which had already made profession of Christianitie, he takes this article as wholly granted. But his onely drift is to prooue vnto them, what Christ his office is, to the ende they might thereby acknowledge that the obseruation of the ceremonies, were abolished by his coming. We must of necessitie note this distinction. For albeit it had beene a superfluous labour in the Apostle, in speaking to those which were then sufficiently perswaded that Iesus which was already manifested was that Christ; to busie himselfe in proouing the same point still vnto them: yet it was necessarie, that he should declare vnto them what this Christ was: because they did not as yet vnderstand the end; the vertue, nor the fruit of his coming. But whilest they beguiled themselves with a false exposition of the lawe; in stead of taking the solide bodie and substance, they rested themselves in the shadow; and contented themselves therewith. The like difference haue we at this day with the Papists: for they confesse indeed with vs that Christ is the sonne of God, which was promised to be the Redeemer of the world: but when we come to ioyne issue, as they say, they dispoyle him of more then the one halfe of his power.

But to the matter; he doth purposely begin his speech with the
B 2 dignitie

dignitie, and greatnes of Christ, because the Jewes were of opinion that there was no reason why the law should be in lesse estimation than the Gospel. First of all then, he confirms the Article whereupon the disputation was: to wit, that the doctrine brought by Christ ought to haue the soueraigne place, because it is the shutting vp and conclusion of all Prophecies. But least the reuerence which they bare to Moses, might be some hindrance vnto them in this behalfe, he shewes that Christ is much more excellent than all others.

And hauing touched in brieft, wherein he is more excellent, he doth purposely subiect the Angels vnderneath him, to the end that all others with them, might be brought vnder, and abased in regard of Christ. Now this manner of proceeding which he vseth, is very fit; and not without great reason. For if he had begunne the comparison with Moses; it would haue bene very odious: but after he hath shewed by the scriptures, that euen the heauenly principalities are beneath Christ; there is neither Moses, nor any man els whatsoeuer, which ought to refuse to be ranged with them, that so the Sonne of God may haue the chieftie aboue all, both Angels and men. And therefore after the Apostle hath brought in the Angels vnder the rule and power of Christ; forthwith, as taking more courage vnto him, he comes to pronounce, and to expresse how much more Moses is inferiour: to wit, the difference is as much as is betweene the master and the seruant. Thus then, when we shall perceine that he alwaies placeth Christ in the soueraigne degree of principallitie, in the first three Chapters, let vs knowe that he aimeth at nothing but this, that when Christ speaketh, all others should hold their peace, and that nothing should hinder vs to giue our whole attention to his doctrine. Although when he sets him before vs, as our brother in our flesh, chap. 2. he calles and allures vs also by this meanes, to the end we should frame our selues vnder his obedience, and giue our selues wholly vnto him. Now he intermingles Exhortations, and threatnings for their sakes that are dull and slowishfull to obey, or; who do obstinately resist. This matter is continued almost to the end of the fourth Chapter. From thence he beginnes to expound the Priesthood of Christ: the true and

and pure knowledge whereof abolisheth all the ceremonies of the lawe. But hauing onely in brieft shewed how amiable the lawe ought to be vnto vs, and with what contentment of mind we may be bold to rest our selues in the same, he digresseth a little from his purpose to blame the Iewes, who like little children, did yet alwaies busie themselves in the first rudiments. Where he also striketh them with terrour, by thundring out a most sharpe and fearefull threatening against them: For he shewes that they stand in great danger to be reiected of the Lord, if they did continue to be so slouthfull in profiting. But by and by after, he aswageth this sharpnesse, saying, that he hath good hope, that they would become better. And this is to the ende he might rather encourage them to goe on forward, than to beate them downe altogether. Then he returnes againe to speake of the Priesthood of Christ. And first he shews that it differs from the ancient Priesthood which was vnder the lawe: secondly, that it was more excellent, because it succeeded in the place of the other, and was confirmed by othe; that it is eternall, and hath alwaies his force, and efficacie: Thirldy, because he that exerciseth this office, surmounteth Aaron, and all others of the tribe of Leui in dignitie and honour. Of all which things he shewes that there was an Image and shadow in the person of Melchisedecke. Now to the ende he might the more certainly prooue that the ceremonies of the lawe were abolished, he shewes how they, as also the Tabernacle, were instituted to another end, to wit, to serue to the heauenly paterne, to which all was referred. Whence it followes, that they were not to be rested in, vnlesse we would stand at a stay in the midde way, making no reckoning to come to the marke. For confirmation of this matter, he alleadgeth the place of Ieremiah, wherein there is promise made of a new Testament, which is nothing els but the correction of the olde. Whence it followes, that the old was earthly and weake. So consequently comming to shew the similitude, and agreement, which is betweene the shadowes and the substance which was manifested in Christ, he concludes that all the ceremonies ordained by Moses, were abolished by his sacrifice; because the efficacie and vertue thereof is perpetuall, and that in it is not onely contained the perfect and full con-

firmation of the new Testament, but also the true and spirituall accomplishment of that externall priesthood, which was in force and had place vnder the lawe. Vnto the doctrine he addeth yet another exhortation, which he vseth as a spurre to pricke them forward, to the end, that renouncing all impediments, they might receiue Christ with such reuerence as was meete. As touching so many examples of the fathers, which he reciteth in the eleventh chapter, I thinke he alleadgeth them of purpose to giue the Iewes to vnderstand, that if so be they were to passe from Moses vnto Christ, it would be so far off, that they should decline from the holy Fathers, that by this meanes rather they should be the more neerely conioyned with them. For if faith were the principal vertue which was in the fathers, yea the very roote of all vertues; it follovs then, that it is this faith also, by which they should especially be acknowledged for the children of Abraham, and of the Prophets. And contrariwise, that all those which followed not the faith of those fathers, were bastards & no children. And surely it is a point which greatly redoundeth to the praise of the Gospell; yea, it should cause vs also to haue it in so much the more estimation, in regard that therein we are found to be such, as haue a sweet accord, and societie with the vniuersall Church, which hath bin since the beginning of the world. The two last Chapters doe containe diuers directions for the rule of a good life: to wit, of hope, of bearing of the crosse, of patience, and perseverance, of the acknowledgement of Gods benefits, of obedience, mercie, and other workes of loue; of chastitie, and all such like things. Lastly, he shuts vp his Epistle with a praier, and forthwith puts them in hope of his comming to see them shortly.



A COMMENTA-
RIE OF M. IOHN CALVIN
ON THE WHOLE EPISTLE
to the Hebrewes.

CHAP. I.

- 1 *At sundrie times, and in diuers manners God spake in the old time to our fathers by the Prophets: In these last daies he hath spoken vnto vs by his sonne,*
- 2 *Whom he hath made heire of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.*



He beginning of this Epistle tends to the praise and commendation of the doctrine of Christ: for he not onely shews that we ought to receiue it with reuerence; but that we are wholly to stay our selues in it alone. Now to the end we may vnderstand this the better,

let vs note the opposition of euery member: First, to the Prophets he opposeth the sonne of God; to the fathers, we that haue liued since Christs comming; Lastly, the diuers formes of speaking to the fathers; to that last reuelation which is now brought vnto vs by Christ. And yet notwithstanding this diuersitie, he propounds but one God; to the end no man should thinke that the law was contrarie to the Gospell, or that there should be one author of the law, and another of the Gospell. And that we may the better con-

ceiue the summe of this proposition, we will vse this figure,
ensuing:

God spake

In olde time by the Prophets: — Now by his Sonne.

Then to the Fathers: — But now to vs.

Then many times: — Now in the last times.

— This foundation beeing laid, you see the consent and agreement betweene the law and the gospel established: because God, who is alwaies like vnto himselfe, and his word, which is the sure and vchangeable truth, did speake both to them, and to vs. But it shall not be amisse to note the difference betweene the fathers and vs: for in olde time God framed his speech and style vnto them in another manner, and order, than he doth now vnto vs.

- 1 For first of all, they had the ministrie of the Prophets: but to vs, he hath ordained his own Sonne, for an Ambassadour. So then in this regard, our estate is better than theirs was.
- 2 Secondly, *Moses* is reckoned among those Prophets; but, as in the number of them, which are farre inferiour to the
- 3 Sonne. Lastly, as concerning the manner of reuelation of the truth; we are also therein farre before them. For the diuersitie of visions, and all the rest of that gouernment which was vnder the old Testament, was a figue vnto them, that their gouernment was not yet settled and established for euer, as it should be afterward, when things were to be reformed and settled wholly and perfectly. Hereunto appertains that which follows: *At sundrie times and in diuers manners God spake, &c.* for God would alwaies haue held and continued one manner of proceeding vnto the ende, if so be the same had beene full, and perfect in all points. It follows by consequence therefore, that these diuersities were signes of imperfection. Moreouer I take these words, *At sundrie times, and in diuers manners*, so, as the first is to be referred to the diuers succession of times; for the Greeke word, to translate it word for word, signifieth in many pieces: as it falleth out when they determine to speake more fully of a matter
in

in time to come. By the second (in mine opinion) he signifies diuersitie, both in the forme and manner of speech.

When he saith, that *he hath spoken to vs in these last times*, his meaning is, that we haue no more occasion to hang in suspence, as though we had need to waite for some new reuelation. For the word which Christ hath brought vnto vs, is not a treatise of some particular parts of doctrine, but it is the last closing vp, and perfect conclusion of all that which is needfull for vs to know vnto saluation. And in this sense, the Apostles doe take the last dayes, and the last times; which thing *Paul* also testifies, where he saith that the ends of the world are come vpon vs, 1. Cor. 10. 11. If so be then that God hath now spoken once for all, in these last times; we for our parts ought to hearken vnto it, and not onely so, but in giuing eare vnto it, we are also to settle and stay our selues in it, and neuer enquire further: which two poynts are not a little auayleable for vs to vnderstand. For first the Iewes are greatly hindred, because they consider not that God hath deferred the reuelation of the perfect doctrine vnto these last times: and therefore contenting themselves with their lawe, they set not themselves forward to come home to the marke: on the other side although Christ be come, and is so receiued, yet an euill no lesse pernicious than the former hath begun to reigne in the world: for men now desire to seeke further than Christ; for I pray you what other thing is there in the whole Papacie, but a straying beyond the limits which the Apostle here hath set vs? Wherefore euen as the spirit of God in this place sommoneth all men to come to Christ: so also it forbids them to passe beyond the bounds of these last words here mentioned. In a word, the highest perfection of our wisdom is to be bounded within the limits of the Gospel.

Whom he hath made heire of all things:] He decketh Christ. Verse 2. with his praises, thereby leading vs to giue him reuerence: for if the Father hath subiected all things vnder him, then we also doubtles doe belong to his iurisdiction. And with all he sheweth that there is no good thing out of him, because:

cause he is the vniuersall heire of the world. Oh how miserable and wretched are we then, if Christ enrich vs not with his benefits? In the second place he addes, that this honour doth of right belong to the sonne of God, to haue authoritie ouer all things, because all things were created by him. Though I deny not but these two titles are attributed vnto Christ in diuers respects. For the world was created by him, because he is the eternall wisdom of God, which from the beginning of the world hath been the disposer of all his workes. And from hence we may note the eternitie of Christ. For it is necessarie indeede that he should be before he could create the world. But if we seeke the length of time, we shall finde no beginning thereof: now it doth nothing at all diminish his power, in that it is said the world was made by him; which sounds as though he made it not himselfe. For it is a manner of speech commonly vsed in the Scriptures, that the Father is called the Creator: and whereas in some places it is added, by his wisdom, Prou. 8. 27. By his word, Iohn 1. 3. By the Sonne, Col. 1. 16. It is all one as if wisdom it selfe were called the Creator of the world. Yet notwithstanding the distinction of the persons is to be noted not onely in regard of vs, but euen as it is in God, betweene the Father and the Sonne. Thus then by reason of the vnitie of the essence it falleth out that whatsoever is essentiall in God, appertaines both to the Father, and to the Sonne: as likewise, that whatsoever simply appertaines vnto God, is common both to the one and to the other. And yet this hinders nothing at all, but that euery person should haue his proprietie.

Now the name *heire* is giuen to Christ manifested in the flesh, for in that he was made man, he thereby clothed himselfe with our very nature: this right of being heire of the world was conferred vnto him, to this end that he thereby might recouer that againe for vs which wee had lost in *Adam*. For in the beginning God appointed man as heire of all his benefits, as if he had been his sonne: but the first man falling away from God by sinne, deprived both himselfe, and

and all his offspring, not onely of Gods blessing, but of all good things themselues, therefore doe wee then begin by good right to enioy these blessings from God, when Iesus Christ who is the onely and vniuersall heire, receiueth vs to haue communion with him. For for this cause is he become heire, to the end he might intrich vs with his benefits. Yea the Apostle himselfe doth adorne him with this very title, to the end we might learne to know that without him, wee are naked and emptie of all good things. Whereas we haue translated *of all things*: the Greeke word might bee as well of all: and then it giues vs to vnderstand, that we ought to be subiect vnto Christ, because the Father hath giuen vs vnto him. But I rather interpret it of *all things*, and so it signifieth that we are thrust out of the lawfull possession of heauen and earth, and of all creatures, till wee come to bee made one with Christ.

Verf. 3. *Who being the brightnes of the glorie, and the ingraued forme of his person, and bearing up all things by his mighty word, hath by himselfe purged our finnes, and sitteth at the right hand of the maiestie in the highest places.*

THESE things are spoken partly of the diuine essence of Christ, and partly of his humane nature. For in that he is called *the brightnes of the glorie, and the ingraued forme of his substance*: it is proper to his diuinitie: the words following likewise appertaine to his humanitie. Yet the whole verse containes notwithstanding an high commendation of the dignitie and excellencie of Christ. Moreouer, looke by what reason he is called the brightnes of the glorie; by the same reason he is called the ingrauen forme of his person. Both which manners of speech are borrowed from the creatures. For nothing can be said of things so high and excellent, vnlesse we borrow some similitudes from them. It is needlesse therefore for vs to stand to dispute ouer subtilly how the Sonne, who is of one essence with the Father, is called *the brightnes of his glorie*. Wee must confesse that that which

which is transferred from the creatures to the maiestie of God, is something improper: yet is it no absurditie that these things visible to our senses should bee applied vnto God, to the end we might be taught thereby what we are to seeke in Christ, and what profit he brings vnto vs. For wee must know, that this place leades vs not to the seeking out of vaine speculations; but to learne therein a true and sure doctrine of faith. Therefore wee are to applie these titles of Christ to our profit: for it is for our sakes that they are thus attributed vnto him. Doe wee heare then that the Sonne is called *the brightnes of the glorie of his Father*? Let vs thus thinke then in our selues: the glorie of the Father is to vs inuisible, till such time as it shine foorth vnto vs in Christ. Is he called the *liuely image of his Fathers substance*? It is to the end we might learne, that the maiestie of the Father is hidden from vs, till such time as he manifests the same vnto vs in this ingraued forme of his image. They which thinke not of this relation, and that these things are attributed vnto Christ as in respect of vs, doe dispute ouer subtilly, and to no purpose: because they vnderstand not the meaning of the holy Apostle. For he doth not here take vpon him to shew what likenes of the Father the Sonne hath within himselfe: but as I haue said, his meaning is to edifie our faith with fruite and profit: to the end we might learne that God is no otherwise manifested vnto vs, but in Christ. For so infinite is that brightnes which is in the essence of God, that our eyes are dazeled therewith, till such time as hee shineth vnto vs in Christ: whereof it followeth, that vnlesse God shew vs his brightnes in Christ, we shall be vtterly blinded with the beholding of that light. And this indeede is a very profitable philosophie, namely to learne the excellencie of Christ by a liuely feeling and certaine experience of faith. As much is to be said as touching the other word, the *ingraued forme*, as I haue said. Thus then the Greeke word which is translated *brightnes*, signifieth in this place no other thing than a visible or shining light which our eyes are not able to beare: And the Greeke word which is translated *image*, signifies

nifies a liuely forme of that substance which is hid and inuisible. By the first word then we learne, that out of Christ we can finde no light but rather meere darknes. For although God be the only light, wherewith we must be enlightened, yet there is no other meanes whereby he sheddeth the same into vs, but by this splendancie of his Sonne, if I may so speake. By the second word we are admonished, that God is truly and fully knowne in Christ. For hee is no darke or shadowish image of him, but the liuely ingraued forme; resembling him naturally, as the money resembles the stamp of the Coyne wherewithall it is stamped. Nay the Apostle saith more: to wit, that the substance of the Father is as it were ingrauen in Christ. The Greeke word which I haue translated *substance* (therein following others) in mine opinion signifies not the being or essence of the Father, but the person. For it is vnapt to say, that the essence of God is ingrauen in Christ: seeing both the one and the other is but one simple essence. But it is proper and truly said, that all that which the Father hath of his owne, is naturally ingrauen in the Sonne: so that whosoever hath the Sonne, hee hath also all that which is in the Father. Thus the ancient Fathers who taught faithfully, doe vse this word *Hypostasis*, which is to say substance, or subsistence, in such sense as it should be triple in God: and that this word *ousia*, which signifies essence, is but one and simple in God. S. *Hillarie* doth euery where take this word substance for person. Now although it bee not the Apostles purpose in this place to shew what Christ is in himself, but such a one as he declares himselfe vnto vs by effect: yet notwithstanding hee doth sufficiently refute the Arrians and Sabellians when he attributes that vnto Christ which onely appertaines to God, and forthwith notes out two distinct substances in the Father and in the Sonne. For from hence wee gather that he is one and the same God onely with the Father, and yet that there is a distinction notwithstanding as touching the proprietie: so as both of them hath his subsistence.

And bearing vp all things] Properly it is, bearing all things.

But

But the word to beare is taken to maintaine, or beare vp, and to cause all creatures to continue in their estate. For his meaning is that all things would presently fall to ruine, if they were not vpheld by his power. Notwithstanding when he saith by his word, this may be expounded as well of the Father as of the Sonne: but because the second exposition is the more receiued, and agreeth very well to the scope of the text, I am content to satisfie my selfe therein. Word for word it is by the word of his power: but according to the manner of the Hebrues, it is as much as if he had said by his mightie word. For whereas some doe thus turne the text, that Christ maintaines all things by his Fathers word, that is, by himselfe who is the word; it hath no colour at all. Besides, what neede is there of so constrained an exposition? For when the Scripture calles Christ the word of the Father, it is not wont to vse the word which is put here, that is, *Rhema*, but another, to wit, *Logos*. Wherefore the word doth here simply signifie to will: and the sense is, that Christ who conserues the world by his onely will, and as it were with his onely becke; notwithstanding refused not to take vpon him the office by which he made the purgation of our sins. And this is the second member of the doctrine which is handled in this Epistle. For the maine groundworke of all the disputation consists in these two points: First, that Christ ought to bee heard aboue all others, because hee hath the chiefe and soveraigne authoritie. Secondly, that in as much as by his death he hath reconciled vs to his Father, hee hath thereby put an end to the old sacrifices. Now where hee saith, *by himselfe*: we must supplie an Antithesis: to wit, that the shadowes of *Moses* law were of no force to assist him in the doing of it. And hereby he shewes the difference betweene him and the Leuiticall Priests: for it was also said of them that they purged sinnes: but they borrowed this vertue from another: to wit, from Christ. To be short, his meaning is to exclude all other meanes, or helps: in laying the power and price of the purgation of our sinnes onely vpon Christ.

And

And is set at the right hand.] As if he should say, after hee had obtained saluation for mankinde, he was receiued into the heavenly glorie, to the end he might gouerne all things. Now this is added, to shew that the saluation which he hath obtained is not temporarie. For otherwise it is our wont to measure his power by beholding of present things. He admonisheth vs then that wee ought not the lesse to esteeme Christ, because he appeares not now before our eyes, but rather to thinke that the fulnes of his glorie consists in his being receiued, and exalted to this high and soueraigne degree of honour and rule: for the right hand is transferred vnto God by way of metaphor and similitude: otherwise he is not shut vp in any place; neither hath he either right hand or left. When it is said therefore that Christ is *set*, it only signifies that kingdome which is giuen him by his father, and that power whereof S. Paul makes mention, to wit, that at his name euery knee shall bow, Phil. 2. 10. Wherefore to be set at the right hand of the Father, is nothing else but to gouerne and rule in the stead of the Father; as the Lieutenants of Princes are wont to doe, to whom free and absolute power is giuen ouer all things. And therefore it is added, *of the maiestie in the highest places:* to signifie that Iesus Christ is placed in the highest throne, wherein the maiestie of God shineth. Wherefore as he ought to be loued for our redemption, so ought he to be adored in regard of this his Maiestie.

Verf. 4. And is made so much more excellent than the Angels, in as much as hee hath obtained a more excellent name than they.

5. For vnto which of the Angels said he at any time, Thou art my sonne, this day beget I thee: And againe, I will be his father, and he shall be my sonne. Psalm. 2. 7. 2. Sam. 7. 14.

HAuing in the former verses preferred Christ before Moses and all others; now also by comparing him with the Angels, hee further amplifies his glorie. It was a thing

thing familiarly knowne to the Iewes, that the Law was giuen by Angels. They heard that which was written of them as touching their honour throughout the whole Scriptures: And as the world is wonderfully enclined to superstition, so also is it wont many times to darken the glorie of God, by too much exalting of Angels. Good reason it is then that they should be set in their proper place, least they might any way hinder the brightnes of Christ. And first of all the Apostle takes his argument from Christs name: to wit, that hee is much more excellent than the Angels, because hee is the Sonne of God. Now he proues by two testimonies of Scripture, that Christ is adorned with this title: which two places wee will first examine, and afterward will gather the summe of the matter.

Vers. 5.

Thou art my Sonne, this day &c.] It cannot be denied but that this is spoken of *Dauid*: why? because he represented the person of Christ. Therefore that which is written in this second Psalme, was figuratiue in *Dauid*: but all was liuely accomplished in Christ. For in regard that *Dauid* by subduing many enemies, did thereby cause the limites of his kingdome to spread round about from one side to another, hee therein was a figure of this promise; I will giue thee the heathen for thine inheritance. But what was this in respect of that large spreading of Christs kingdome, the bounds whereof stretch from the East to the West? By the same reason *Dauid* was in like manner called the sonne of God: that is to say, specially chosen of God to performe excellent things. But this alas was scarce one sparkle of that glorie which shined in Christ, in whom the Father hath ingrauen his owne image. So that the name of Sonne, doth appertaine onely to Christ by a speciall priuiledge: neither can it be transferred vnto any other whatsoever, but it shall be prophaned. For the Father hath set his seale on him, and vpon none else, Ioh. 6. 27. Ioh. 10. 36. But it may seeme that the argument of the Apostle is not yet firme enough: for whereupon doth he ground it to prooue that Christ is more excellent than the Angels, but vpon this that hee hath the name

Obiectien.

name of *Sonne*? As if it were not common also as well to *Objection.*

Princes, and all those that are placed in high dignities as to him: of whom it is written; I haue said ye are Gods, and ye *Psal.82.6.*

all are the children of the most high. Or as if the Prophet spake not more honourably of Israel when hee calles him the first borne of God, *Jerem. 31.9.* for this title of sonne is euery where attributed vnto him. Moreover, *David* in other places calles the Angels the sonnes of God. Who is like the Lord among the sonnes of the Gods? *Psal.89.6.* But the

answere is easie: to wit, that Princes are called by this name *Answer.*

in regard of their preheminance: And Israel is so called to note out vnto vs the common grace of election: The Angels in like manner are called the sonnes of the Gods by a figuratiue kinde of speech, because they are celestiaall spirits, who haue a certaine taste of the diuinitie in the immortall blessednes. But when *David* in the person of Christ calles himselfe the sonne of God simply without any addition, he therein notes out something more peculiar and excellent than all the honour not only of all Israel, but of Princes and Angels also. Otherwise it were but an improper kinde of speech and altogether vsfitting, if he should be called the sonne of God by way of excellencie, and yet should haue nothing in him more worthie than others: for by this title he is exempt out of the order and number of all degrees both of men and Angels.

Seeing these words then, *Thou art my sonne*, are exclusiue-ly spoken of Christ, it also followes, that such honour is vn-
Objection.
Answer.
 befitting any of the Angels. If any doe yet replie, that by this *David* is exalted aboue the Angels: I answer, there is no inconuenience at all if hee be preferred before them, in as much as he is the figure of Christ: neither in that sense is it any iniurie to the Angels that the high Priest was called the mediatour to purge sinnes. For the Priests had not this as being properly theirs: but because they represented the kingdome of Christ; they therefore borrowed this name of mediatour from him. Yea, and howsoeuer the Sacraments are but dead things in themselves, yet notwithstanding

they are adorned with those titles which the Angels cannot attribute vnto themselves without sacriledge.

Hereby then it sufficiently appeares, that the argumēt taken from this title of Sonne, is good. As touching the generation or begetting of the Sonne, this wee are to note in a word, that it is taken here by way of relation. For the subtiltie of S. *Augustine* is friuolous, who imagines that Christ is eternall *to day*, and so continues. True it is that Christ is the eternall sonne of God: for hee is his wisdom, begotten of him before all worlds: but this makes nothing to this present place, which speakes not of the eternall generation of the Sonne, but is rather spoken in regard of vs, who doe now acknowledge him to be the Sonne of God, since the Father hath manifested him in the flesh. And therefore that same declaration whereof also S. *Paul* makes mention, Rom. i. 4. was as a kinde of eternall generation, as you would say: for this secret and hidden generation which went before, was vnknowne vnto men: and should not haue come to light if the Father had not approoued the same by a manifest and visible reuelation thereof.

Again, *I will be his father, &c.*] In this second testimonie, that which we haue noted ought also to haue place: that is, howsoeuer *Salomon* is here chiefly meant (who otherwise was lesse than the Angels) yet notwithstanding he is now separated from the common order of all men, in that God promiseth him that he will be his Father: for God was not reckoned his father, as being one of the sonnes of *Abraham*, or as to some of the Princes, but to him which was more excellent than any other. So that looke by what priuiledge hee is established Gods sonne, by the same priuiledge all others are shut out from hauing equall degree of honour with him. Now it appeares by the whole text, that this is no otherwise said of *Salomon*, but as he was a figure of Christ: for the rule and gouernment of the whole world is destinate to this Sonne, of whom hee there speakes: and a perpetuities of gouernment is promised vnto him. On the contrarie, wee may see that *Salomons* kingdome was bounded

ded within streight limits : and so farre was it off from enduring long, that by and by after his death it was diuided ; and a litle after that fell to ruine. Yet in the Psalme, the Sunne and the Moone are called soorth for witnessles ; and the Lord himselfe sweareth that this kingdome shall remaine safe and vnmoueable, as long as they shall shine in the firmament. Contrariwise the kingdome of *Danid* fell to decay not long after, and in the end was cleane abolished. Moreouer, it may be gathered from many places of the Prophets, that this promise was neuer otherwise meant than of Christ. So as none can caull, that we haue coyned a new exposition : for this kinde of speech where they call Christ the sonne of *Danid*, was vsually receiued among the Iewes.

Verf. 6. *And againe, when he bringeth in his first begotten sonne into the world, he saith, And let all the Angels of God worship him.* Verse 6. Psal. 97. 7.

NOW he exalts Christ aboue the Angels, for another reason : to wit, because the Angels are commaunded to worship him: for thereupon it followes that he is their head and Prince. Notwithstanding, it should seeme that the Apostle doth ill in applying this to Christ, which is spoken of God. If we answer that Christ is the eternall God, and that for this cause whatsoeuer appertaines to God, doth also by right appertaine vnto him ; yet in so answering we should not satisfie all that might be obiected. For it were to small purpose to proue a doubtfull thing, if wee should ground our argument in this matter vpon the common titles of God. For the question is of Christ manifested in the flesh. But to answer to the point, we must vnderstand, that the Apostle expressly saith that the holy Ghost spake thus, when the Sonne was brought into the world : which were not truly spoken, if so be the Psalme did not speake properly of the manifestation of Christ : yet questionlesse that is the very true meaning. For the beginning of the Psalme is an exhortation.

hortation to reioyce: neither doth *David* speake there to the Iewes onely, but addresseth his speech to all the earth, euen to the Isles: that is to say, to the Regions beyond the Seas. The reason of this reioycing is in these words: *for the Lord reigneth*. And if afterward you reade the whole Psalm, you shall see nothing spoken in it that doth not belong to the kingdom of Christ, which began when the Gospell was published. Yea the whole argument of the Psalme is nothing else but a letter authentically wherewith Christ is sent (as you would say) to be put into the possession of his kingdom. Now what cause of ioy would this kingdom bring, if so be it were not a kingdom of saluation to all the world, that is to the Gentiles as well as to the Iewes? Wherefore the Apostle speakes here very properly and to the purpose, when he saith that Christ is brought into the world, to wit, because his comming vnto men is there described. Moreover, the Hebrue word *Elohim*, for which hee hath here put Angels, doth also signifie Gods: but wee are not to doubt but the Prophet speakes of Angels. For this is the sense, there is no power so high which ought not to stoope to the rule of this King, seeing his comming shall bring an vniuersall ioy to all the world.

Psal. 104. 4.

Vers. 7. And of the Angels he saith he maketh the spirits his messengers, and his ministers a flame of fire.

IT seemes that in alleaging this place, hee drawes it to a contrarie sense. For albeit *David* doth in this Psalme describe the order which God keepes in governing of the world, so as out of all question in this fourth verse he speaks of the windes, which he saith are made his messengers, in regard they runne as posts at his becke, and commandement: so that whensoever hee causeth the earth to ring with his thunders, they shew what readie and diligent seruants they are to execute their charge enioyned them. But what doth all this appertaine to the Angels? For answer, some take it to be spoken allegorically, as if the Apostle should expound

pound the literall and plaine sense of Angels by an Allegorie, as they call it. But for my part, I had rather say that this place was alleaged to bee applied to the Angels by way of similitude, in this manner: *David* compares the windes to the Angels, so as they exercise the like office here in this world, which the Angels doe in heauen, the windes being visible spirits as it were. For euen as *Moses* in the creation of the world recites onely the things which are to be perceived by our senses, and yet notwithstanding would that higher things should bee comprehended therewithall: so *David* in this description of the world, and of nature, paints out vnto vs as in a table that which we ought also to vnderstand as touching the heauenly order. And therefore I think this is an argument which we call a similie, that is to say, of a thing like, when the Apostle transferreth that to the Angels, which is properly spoken of the windes.

8 But vnto the Sonne he saith, O God thy throne is for euer. Verse 8.
and euer: the scepter of thy kingdome is a scepter of righteousnes.

9 Thou hast loued righteousnes, and hated iniquitie. Wherefore God, euen thy God hath annoynted thee with the oyle of gladnes above thy fellowes. Psal. 45.7.

WE cannot denie but that this Psalme was composed for *Salomon* in forme of a mariage song: because his mariage with the King of *Egypt*s daughter is celebrated therein: yet notwithstanding wee must also confesse that that which is here said is so excellent, that it cannot wholly be found in *Salomon*. Now least the Iewes should be constrained to confesse that Christ is God, they doe here frame a cauill: to wit, that this throne is of God; or that we must supplie the verbe, *hath established*, and say, *God hath established thy throne*. Thus after the first exposition this word *Elohim* should be translated in the Genitiue, *of God*: the other exposition supposeth that this sentence should be imperfect: but one may very well see that they seeke nothing else but starting holes. Whosoeuer then shall reade

this sentence with ripenes of iudgement, and without a mind bent to cōtention, he shal not denie, but the Messias is here called God. And let no man replie, that here is a word vsed which is common both to Angels and Iudges: for we shall not finde it in any place whereſoeuer, attributed to any one in particular but to God. Further, to the end that I strue not about the word; where shal that throne be found which may be said to be stable and firme *for euer, and euer*, vnlesse it bee the throne of God? The perpetuities therefore of the kingdome is a certaine testimonie of the Diuinitie. Now in the next place, the scepter of Christs kingdome is called a *scepter of righteousness*: whereof there was some figure in *Salomon*, but very obscure: that is to wit, so farre forth as he shewed himselfe a iust King and a louer of Equitie. But the righteousness, and equitie of Christ his kingdome doth farre exceede: the reason is, because that by the Gospell which is a spirituall scepter he reformeth vs according to the righteousness of God. As much is to be said touching his *loue of righteousness*. For because he loueth it, therefore he causeth it to reigne in those that are his.

Therefore God, euen thy God:] It is certaine that this is truly spoken of *Salomon*, who was annointed King, because God preferred him before all his brethren, who excepting this, were equall, and children of a King also as well as he. But it more fitly agreeth to Christ, who hath adopted vs to himselfe to be companions together with him: howbeit, not by any right of our own. Now, he is *annointed above his fellowes*, because he was annointed without measure: but wee, euery one according to our measure, as it is distributed; to some more, to some lesse. Moreouer, he was annointed for our sakes, to the end all of vs might draw out of his fulnes, Ioh. 1. 16. And therefore he is the Christ, that is to say the annointed: and we Christians, in, & thorow him, as the riuers do streame from the fountaine: now for as much as Christ hath receiued this annointing in his flesh, it is therefore said that hee was annointed of *his God*. For it should be absurd to say he was inferiour to God, vnlesse in regard of his humane nature.

10 And thou Lord, in the beginning hast established the earth, and the heauens are the workes of thine hands. Verse 10.

11 They shall perishe, but thou dost remaine: and they all shall waxe old as doth a garment. Psal. 102. 26.

12 As a vesture shalt thou fold them vp, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy yeeres shall not faile.

IT may seeme at the first blush that this testimonie is vnfitly alleaged of Christ, and specially in a matter so doubtfull, as this is whereof he intreateth. For the question is not as touching the glorie of God, but of that which properly belongs and agreeth vnto Christ. Now there is no mention of Christ in this place, but the maiestie of God is rather set foorth simply vnto vs therein. But although it bee granted that no mention at all is made in this Psalme of Christ: yet we may euidently perceiue that hee is so pointed out in it, that no man neede to doubt but that his kingdome is recommended as directly therein vnto vs, as if it were vttered in plaine and expresse words. Therefore whatsoever is contained in it ought to be applied to the person of Christ. For whereas it is said in the former verses, Thou wilt arise and haue compassion on Sion, that the Gentiles may feare thy name, and all the Kings of the earth thy glorie. And again, when the people shall be gathered together, and the kingdomes to serue the Lord. All this you know was not fulfilled but in Christ. Truly we shall but lose our labour to seek this God by whom all the world was vnited into one faith, and into one spirituall worship, vnlesse wee seeke him in Christ. So then all the whole contents of this Psalme, agreeth properly to the person of Christ. First, in that hee is called the eternall God, Creator of heauen and earth. Secondly, that such a perpetuitie is attributed vnto him as is without change; by reason whereof his Maiestie is exalted into the highest degree, and himselfe exempt out of the ranke of all creatures.

Now whereas *David* saith, that *the heauens shall perishe,*

some do resolute the meaning thus: if it please God it should
 so come to passe, to wit, that the heauens should perish:
 which sense if it stand for good, then nothing should be af-
 firmed. But what neede haue we of such a constrained ex-
 position, when as we know that all creatures are subiect to
 vanitie: for to what purpose should this renument of the
 heauens serue, (the which they attend and waite for with
 no lesse desire then women in trauaile to be deliuered) if
 there should be no change of them? And therefore the per-
 petuities of Christ, which is heere magnified, brings singular
 consolation to the faithfull, whereof this Psalm in the end
 concludes that they shall bee partakers. For Christ, you
 know, communicates himselfe, and all his benefits to his
 bodie the Church.

Verse 13.
 Psal. 110. 1.
 1. Cor. 15. 25.

13 *Vnto which of the Angels also said be at any time, sit at
 my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool?*

14 *Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister,
 for their sakes, which shall be heires of salvation?*

HE yet againe extols the excellencie of Christ by ano-
 ther testimonie, to the end we might thereby knowe
 how farre he surpasseth the Angels. The testimonie is drawn
 out of the hundreth and tenth Psalm; which cannot be
 expounded of any other than of Christ. For seeing it was vn-
 lawfull for Kings to meddle with the Priesthood, as the le-
 prosie of king *Ezzias* witnesseth; and seeing it is manifest
 likewise that neither *Dauid* nor any of his successors in the
 kingdome were ordained Priests; it thereupon follows that
 here is a newe kingdome, and a newe prielthood, seeing one
 onely is appointed for both these offices. Besides that; the
 eternitie of the Priesthood agrees to none but to Christ.
 Now in the very beginning of the Psalm he is placed at the
 right hand of God. Which manner of speech, is as much as
 if he had said, that the second place was giuen him after the
 father. For it is a similitude, or metaphor by which he signi-
 fies, that he is the fathers Lieutenant and his cheif Ambassa-
 dour

dout to exercise his power, so as the Father raignes, and governs; yet by his hand. Now there is neuer a one among the angels, which hath so excellent and high an office: and therefore it followes that Christ is farre more excellent than they all.

Till I make thine enemies thy footstools. Because Christ is neuer without enemies which fight against his kingdome, it seemes not altogether out of danger: especially if we looke vpon those who endeaour with might and maine to overthrow it, for as they haue great power and force, so they want no subtiltie, nor politique deuises, but haue skill enough to put in exequution all their designs, with no lesse then a furious madnesse. And if on the other side, we shall with the eies of flesh onely, looke vpon the little flocke of Christ, wee shall thinke euer and anon that his kingdome is readie to fall to the ground. But this promise dispossesseth vs of all feare, to wit, when we heare that Christ shall neuer be plucked from his seate, but shall raigne rather, till he put all his enemies vnder his seete. It is profitable therefore for vs to note these two things. First, that the kingdome of Christ as long as it is in this world shall neuer be in rest and quiet, but shall haue many aduersaries which will molest and trouble it: Secondly, let the enemies plot and conspire what they can, yet they shall neuer attaine the end which they aime at: because Christ who is set at the right hand of his father, is not set there for a time, but shall sit there till the end of the world. Therefore let all those looke to be overthrown and troden vnder his seete, that wil not submit themselues as subiects vnder his Imperiall gouernment.

Though Christs kingdome be daily assaulted, yet it shall neuer be vanquished.

Now if it be demanded, whether the kingdome of Christ shall end after he hath subdued, and destroyed all his enemies: I answer, it is certaine that it shall be perpetuall; but in such a manner as Saint *Paul* sets it out vnto vs in the 15. to the Corinth. For we must vnderstand that God, who now will be onely knowne in Christ, shall then appeare vnto vs in himselfe. Christ indeed shall still continue the head both of men and Angels, but yet so, that his honour shall be no

1. Cor. 15. 27. 28.

way.

way diminished thereby. Now they that would be further resolved as touching this question, let them haue recourse to that which I haue written vpon the foresaid place to the Corinthians.

Ver. 14.

Are they not all, &c.] Now he speakes of the condition of Angels, shewing what it is, to the ende the comparison betweene them and Christ might be the better vnderstood. True it is, that in calling them spirits, you may therein see a title of great excellencie. For in this respect they are aduanced farre aboue bodily creatures. But the word of administration which he immediately addeth is to abase them, and to hold them within the compasse of their degree: for Administration is set against Rule, and Emperiall dominion. And this doth he yet further declare when he saith, *To minister*: For the first Epethite, signifies as much, as if he had called them officers: but the name of minister is yet more base and abiect. I grant indeed, it is an honourable seruice which God enioynes the Angels: yet notwithstanding in as much as they serue; it thereby appeares that they are too inferiour to be compared with Christ, who is Lord ouer all. If any shall obiect that Christ is also called a seruant and minister in many places, and not onely Gods seruant, but ours also: the solution is easie, to wit, that it is not in regard of his nature, but of the voluntarie abasing of himselfe, as Saint Paul witnesseth, Phil. 2. 7. and that his principalitie notwithstanding remaines entire and whole vnto him. Now the Angels on the contrarie, are created to the end they should serue; and their whole condition consists in administration. So then here is great difference betweene Christ and the Angels, because that which is natural in the Angels, is in Christ by accident, in respect that he is cloathed with our flesh: and that which is theirs by necessitie, Christ accepted of it voluntarily. Moreouer Christ is so a minister or seruant, that it derogates nothing at all from his Emperiall maiestie, no not in the flesh: Now the faithfull receiue from hence a verie singular consolation, when they heare that the heauenly armies are giuen them for their ministers and seruants, to procure

Obiect.

Ans.

procure their safetie and saluation. For is it not a wonderful pledge of Gods loue towards vs, to know that they are incessantly imployed for our protection? from this also proceedes a singular confirmation of our faith: to wit, that our saluation beeing fortified with such helpes, is out of danger.

God therefore doth provide exceeding carefull for our weaknesse, when he giues vs such helpers which are readie with vs to resist Satan, and doe euery way imploy their power and diligence to maintaine and defend vs. But this benefit is proper onely to the elect of God; and therefore if we would that Gods Angels should be ours, let vs looke that we be the members of Christ. Some examples and testimonies might be brought indeed to shew how the Angels haue beene sent sometime to attend vpon the reprobates. For in *Daniel* the 10. chap. and 20. verse, mention is made of the Angels of the Persians, and Greekes. But I answer, they were so aided by the Angels, that by meanes thereof, the Lord aduanced the saluation of his people. For the happy issues in their affaires, and the victories which they obtained, fell out alwaies to the benefit of the Church, as to their chiefe marke and end. Howsoeuer it be, this remaines sure, that all of vs being banished by our finnes, out of the kingdome of God, we haue now no fellowship at all with the blessed Angels, but by the reconciliation made by Christ: and this is manifest by the ladder which the Patriarke *Iacob* saw in a vision erected before him. Gen. 28. 18.

They that will haue the protection of Angels, must looke that themselves be the members of Christ.

CHAP. II.

- 1 Wherefore we ought diligently to giue heed to the things Verse 1.
- 2 Which we haue heard, least at any time we runne out.
- 3 For if the word spoken by Angels was steadfast, and euery transgression and disobedience receiued a iust recompence of Reward,
- 4 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great saluation, which

at:

at the first began to be preached by the Lord, & afterward was confirmed vnto vs by them that heard him,

4 God bearing witnes thereto, both with signes and wonders, and with diuers miracles, and gifts of the holy Ghost, according to his owne will.

¶ Or this cause we ought &c.] Now hee shewes what his drift hath been all this while in comparing of Christ with the Angels: euen that he might thereby maintaine the soueraigne authoritie of his doctrine. For if the law which was giuen by Angels, ought not to be lightly regarded and receiued: and if the transgression thereof was also grieuously punished: what will become (saith he) of the contemners of the Gospel, which hath the Sonne of God both for the author and defender of it, and hath also been confirmed by so many miracles? The summe of these foure verses is this, that because the dignitie of Christ is farre greater than that of the Angels, so much the more reuerence is due rather to the Gospell than to the Law. So then he commends and extols the doctrine, by the excellencie of the authors person. Now if it seeme harsh vnto any, seeing that both the doctrines, as well of the Law as of the Gospell are of God, and yet that the one should be preferred before the other, as if thereby the maiestie of God should be impaired, because the Law is lesse esteemed than the Gospell. The answer to this is easie, to wit, it is very certaine, that God ought alwaies to be heard alike as often as hee speakes: and yet it hinders not, but by how much the more plainly it pleaseth him to speake vnto vs, by so much the more haue we good reason with all reuerence and obedient affection to be moued forthwith to hearken, according to the measure of that which is reuealed. Not that God in himselfe is lesse at one time more than at another: but because we are vnable to acknowledge and perceiue his greatnes and excellencie alwaies alike.

Yet here ariseth also another question: to wit, if the Law it selfe was not giuen by the hand of Christ. Which being so,

Obiection.

Answer.

Question.

so, it seemes the Apostles argument is absurd. I answer, *Answer.* that in this comparison, regard must be had on the one side to the hidden reuelation of Christ, and on the other side to that reuelation which was more manifest. Now for as much as Christ shewed himselfe but darkly, and as it were vnder shadowes and figures in the publishing of the Law, wee are not to wonder (if without mentioning of Christ) hee saith the Law was given by Angels. For at that time hee did not shew himselfe openly. But in the publishing of the Gospel his glorie was so euidently and cleerely reuealed, that he is worthily reputed to be the author of it.

Least at any time we runne out, or fall away. Although the diuers readings bee of no great consequence, because wee may collect the true sense by the Antithesis: for *to take heed*, and *to runne out*, are opposite. The first signifieth to conserue and keepe: the second to shed, or suffer all that to be lost which was put within: as wee see in a sieue, or such like vessell. For I allow not of their opinion which interpret it, to die: as it is said in 2. Sam. 14. 4. We all die and are as water spilt vpon the ground. We must rather (as I haue said) consider the Antithesis, which is betweene the words *to hold*, and *to spill*. For the attentiu minde is like a vessell close stopped, and the carelesse and wandring minde like a vessell full of holes.

For if the word spoken by Angels was stedfast:] That is to say, had his weight; because God did authorize it. Which may be the better vnderstood by those articles which containe the threatnings: for no breaker or contemner of the Law went unpunished. This stedfastnes then signifies Authoritie: and that which is added of reward or punishment, is to be taken as an exposition of the former word *stedfast*: because it did hereby well appeare that it was not a vaine or needlesse doctrine, seeing God shewed his mightie hand in punishing the transgressors of it.

If we neglect:] Not onely the reiection, but also the very contempt of the Gospell doth iustly deserue punishment, that is, in regard of the greatnes of that grace which is offered

Verse 2.

Verse 3.

*He that reiects
the Gospel, re-
iects the salua-
tion of God.*

red therein. And therefore he saith, *so great saluation*. For God would haue vs to esteeme his gifts according to their excellencie. By how much the more pretious they be then, so much the more is our vile ingratitude, if wee prize them not according to their value. Now for as much as Christ is great; great and rigorous will Gods vengeance be vpon all the contemners of the Gospel. And it is to be noted, that the name of saluation is transferred in this place by the figure Metonymia, to the doctrine: because as it is Gods wil and pleasure y men shall be no other way saued than by the Gospel; so, in reiecting of it, we reiect the saluation of God. For it is the power of God to all them that beleeue. He then which seekes saluation by any other meanes, he will haue it without the power and vertue of God; and what a senselesnes is that? But this title tends not onely to the magnifying of the Gospel, but it is also a singular stay and prop of our faith: because it testifies that the word is not in vaine, but containes in it most certaine and assured saluation.

which first began to be preached by the Lord.] Here he opposeth the Sonne of God, who was the first preacher of the Gospel against the Angels. Now withall he vseth a preuention, to take away a doubt which might enter into many mens phantasies. For they had not beene taught by the mouth of Christ immediatly, because the most part of them had neuer scene him. Had they onely respected men then, by whose ministerie they were brought to the faith, it is likely they would not haue regarded that which they had learned of them. And therefore the Apostle admonisheth them that the doctrine which was deliuered vnto them by the ministerie of others, did not therefore cease to proccede from Christ. For hee saith, that they were the disciples of Christ, who faithfully reported that which they had heard and received of him. And therefore he vseth this word *confirmed*: as if hee should say, it was not a matter of report scattered abroad hand ouer head, as if they knew not whence it came, or as if they had it by suspected witnesses: but that it hath authors both graue, and also men of good credit.

Further-

Furthermore, wee may know by this place that this Epistle was not penned by *S. Paul*: for he useth not so to diminish his authoritie, as to make himselfe one of the disciples of the Apostles, not that he meant thereby to purchase any glorie to his owne person: but because false teachers vnder this colour endeououred so much the more to lessen the credit of his doctrine. It appeares then that it is not *S. Pauls*, seeing the author writes that hee had the Gospell by the report of others, and not by reuelation.

God bearing witnes thereto.] The Apostles had not onely that which they preached by reuelation from the Sonne of God, but the Lord did also therewithall confirme their preaching by miracles, as by an authenticall subscription. Therefore they offer great iniurie not onely to Gods word, but to his workes also, who doe not with all reuerence receiue the Gospel which is ratified and confirmed by so many testimonies. Now for the better amplification hereof he useth three words to note out miracles. They are called *Powers*, because that in them the Lord sheweth a speciall and extraordinarie testimonie of his vertue and power. They are called *Signes*, because they awaken mens mindes to looke a little higher than to that which appeares. They are called *Miracles*, because they containe somewhat that is new and strange. In this word *witnessing*, is noted the right vse of miracles: to wit, they serue to establish and confirme the Gospell: for we finde that almost all miracles whensoever they were wrought, serued as seales to the word of God. And therefore so much the more ought the superstition of the Papists to be condemned, which alleage the miracles of their owne deuising; for they make them serue (not to confirme) but to corrupt the truth of God.

This word, *thereto*, hath this sense, that wee are confirmed in the faith of the Gospell by an agreement and harmonie which is betweene God and men, because the miracles wrought by God doe agree with the voyce of men, and serue as a testimonie thereto. Afterwards he addeth, *Gifts of the holy Ghost*: by which the doctrine of the Gospell was also

so adorned, as being dependances of it. For to what purpose hath God distributed the gifts of his Spirit, but to the end they might bee meanes and helps in part to publish this doctrine; and in part to beget an admiration in men, that their hearts might be moued thereby to obey the doctrine? For otherwise *S. Paul* saith in the first to the *Cor.* 14. 22. that the diuersities of tongues are giuen for signes, not to them that belecue, but to them that beleue not. This clause, according to his will, admonisheth vs that those powers and wonders, whereof hee made mention before, cannot be attributed to any other than to God, and that they were not done by chance, but by his determinate counsell, to the end they might seale vp the truth of the Gospell.

5 For hee hath not put in subiection vnto the Angels the world to come, whereof we speake.

Psal. 8. 5.

6 But one in a certaine place witnessed, saying, What is man that thou shouldest be mindfull of him? or the sonne of man, that thou wouldest consider him?

7 Thou madest him a little inferiour to the Angels: thou crownest him with glorie and honour, and hast set him about the workes of thine hands.

Matth. 28. 18.

1. Cor. 15. 27.

8 Thou hast put all things in subiection vnder his feete. And in that he hath put all things in subiection vnder him, he left nothing that should not be subiect vnto him. But wee see not all things yet subdued vnto him.

Philip. 2. 8.

9 But wee see Iesus crowned with glorie and honour, which was made little inferiour to the Angels, through the suffering of death, that by Gods grace he might taste death for all men.

Verf. 5.

FOr he hath not] He proues againe by another argument that wee ought to obey Christ: to wit, because the Father hath put the rule and highest gouernment ouer the whole world into his hands: of which honour the Angels are vncapable. From whence it followes, that there is nothing in the Angels be it neuer so great that ought to hinder him who onely is the highest, that hee should not haue the

the soueraigntie ouer all creatures. But it is needfull in the first place that we examine the Psalme which he alleageth: because it seemes he draweth the words thereof vnfitly vnto Christ. For may some say, *David* doth there recite the benefits which God sheweth to mankinde. And after he had considered of the power of God in the heauens, and in the starres, he comes in the next place to speake of men: concerning whom the wonderfull bountifullnes of Gods goodnes doth especially appeare. And therefore it should seeme he speakes not of one man alone, but of all men in generall. To which I answere, all this lets not but these sentences may be restrained to the person of Christ. I denie not but man from the beginning was set into the possession of the world, to the end hee should haue lordship ouer all the workes of God: but he deserued by his transgression to bee deprived, and dispossessed of al that rule and gouernment. For it is the iust punishment of ingratitude in a vassall, who holds all he hath of another, that his Lord whom he refuseth to acknowledge, or serue faithfully as hee ought, should dispoyle him of all that right, and of all those benefits which were giuen him before. And therefore as soone as *Adam* turned away from God by his sinne, he was worthely deprived of all the benefits he had receiued. Not that hee lost the vse, but because hee could no longer lay claime vnto them; himselfe hauing forsaken God the giuer of them. And euen concerning the vse also, God would there should remaine signes therein of this priuation. As for example, how comes it to passe that the beasts doe rise vp in fiercenes against vs: and wheras they should feare our countenances, we feare them: so that some of them can neuer be brought into subiection, and those that bee, it is with great difficultie for the most part? What is the reason that many of them are hurtfull vnto vs so many waies? that the earth doth not of it selfe bring forth encrease according to the tilling and sowing bestowed vpon it, that the heauens, the aire, the sea, and other creatures are become so noysome and hurtfull vnto vs? Is it not because we haue rebelled against our heavenly Creator?

D

But

Objection.

Answer.

None of all the
creatures ap-
pertaine to vs,
untill wee our
selues apper-
taine vnto
God.

But put the case that all the creatures should continue their subiection, yet notwithstanding all things whereof the sonnes of *Adam* doe take their vse, is imputed vnto them for theft before God. For what can they bragge of as appertaining vnto them, seeing they themselues appertaine not vnto God? This foundation being laid, it appears that this benefit of God doth in no sort any way belong vnto vs, till that right which wee haue lost in *Adam*, be restored to vs againe in Christ. For which cause *S. Paul* teacheth that meates and drinckes are sanctified vnto vs by the word and prayer, 1. Tim. 4. 5. And in another place hee saith, that to the vnbeleeuing nothing is pure, because without faith their mindes and consciences are impure and defiled, Tit. 1. 15. And that is it which we had in the beginning of this Epistle, where it is said that Christ is ordained of his Father heire of all things. Truly in that he attributes the inheritance to one onely, hee thereby excludes all others as strangers. And that very iustly: for wee are all of vs banished out of Gods kingdome. What haue we to doe then to scrape vnto our selues those creatures which hee hath ordained for the nourishment of his household children and seruants? But Christ, by whom wee are called againe into the familie and household of God, receiueth vs with him into the societie of his right and title, to the end that by him (with all the elect) wee might enioy the whole world with the blessing of God. For man hauing receiued rule and lordship ouer all creatures, and by his sinne losing all right and interest in them, both for himselfe, and all his posteritie: God the Father instituted in his place a second *Adam*, his only begotten sonne Iesus Christ God and Man, to whom hee hath giuen power and lordship ouer all creatures, and hath also giuen him authoritie to communicate the comfortable right, and lawfull vse of them to whom he will, that is to say, vnto the faithfull, but not to the reprobates and vnbeleeuers.

And therefore *S. Paul* shewes that *Abraham* was made heire of the world by faith: that is to say, because he was incorporated into the bodie of Christ, Rom. 4. 13. which being

ing so, let all men know that they are debarred from all benefits of God, till such time as they come to bee made partakers of Christ. It doth now euidently appeare then that wee haue lost this lordship, whereof the Psalmist speaketh in *Adam*: and that therefore it behoues vs to seeke a new donation in Christ. Which I heartily wish and desire all men to seeke timely, and earnestly. Now this restoration and renument is begun in Christ as by the head. We neede not doubt then to behold our title and recouerie of our first estate in him, as often as there shall be any question moued touching the power and authoritie of man ouer all creatures. And hereunto appertaines that which hee expressely mentionieth touching *the world to come*. For hee takes it for the renewed world to come. And to the end we may the better vnderstand this, let vs conceiue in our minds two worlds: first, that old world which was corrupt by the sinne of *Adam*: and the second, that which is repaired by Christ. For the estate of the first creation is forlorne and false into ruine with man, so farre soorth as there is respect vnto him. This Psalme then shall haue no place till such time as a restoration be made by Christ. We now see well that he calles not onely the estate of those things which we waite for after the resurrection *the world to come*: but that also which took his beginning from the first raigne of Christ, and shall haue his accomplishment in the last redemption. I cannot conceiue the reason why hee suppressed *Dauids* name: and yet I assure my selfe that hee doth not call him *a certaine one*, by way of contempt, but doth so name him by way of honour, as being one of the Prophets, or of the most excellent and authentique authors.

All our right to the creatures consists in Christ.

Two worlds.

Thou hast made him a little inferiour.] Here we doe meete with a new difficultie in the exposition of the words, I grant (as I haue alreadie said) that the place is not improperly expounded of the Sonne of God: but a man would thinke the Apostle doth now draw the words to a sense, contrarie to *Dauids* meaning: for it seemes that he referres this word *a little*, to the time: and thereby vnderstands the abasing of

Verse 7.

Christ in regard he was made none account of: restraining the glorie to the day of the resurrection: whereas *David* stretcheth it generally to the whole life of man. I answer, that it was not the Apostles meaning to recite the native exposition of the words. For no inconuenience followes, if we say that he alludes to the words of *David*, thereby to adorne the point which he handleth: as *S. Paul* in the tenth to the Romanes alleageth the place of *Moses*, Who shall ascend into heaven? He addeth by and by after, not the interpretation, but rather an amplification to adorne his speech, transferring that to the heavenly heritage, and to hell, which *Moses* had said of the Heauens, and of the Sea. And such is the intencion of *David*, Lord (saith he) thou hast aduanced man to such great dignitie, that hee wants not much of approching neere to the honour of God, or of the Angels. For thou hast made him ruler over the whole world. The Apostle ment not to ouerthrow this sense, neither yet to turne it to a contrarie: but his meaning is onely that we should behold in Christ that abasement which he did vndergo for a little time: and afterward that glorie wherewithall he was crowned for euer: which he doth, rather by way of allusion to the words, than to expresse that which *David* ment by them. He taketh *to be mindfull and to visite*, for one thing; sauing that *to visite* hath a more full signification. For he notes the presence of God by the effects.

Ver. 8.

Now in that he hath put all things.] One would thinke that the argument should be framed thus; All things are subiect to the man of whom *David* speakes. But all things are not made subiect to mankinde: therefore hee speakes not of e- uery particular man. But this argument would not hold: because the second proposition, which wee call the minor, doth also agree vnto Christ. For euen to him all things are not yet subiect: as *S. Paul* shewes 1. Cor. 15. 18. Therefore the words following haue another sense. For after hee hath made Christ to bee the ruler ouer all creatures without exception, he addeth by way of a contrarie obiection, *But we see not yet all things subiect vnto him*: and to satisfie vs here- in,

in, he teacheth that one may see that accomplished in Christ notwithstanding euen now, which followeth by and by after touching his *crowning with glorie and honour*. As if he had said, although this generall subiection doth not yet appeare vnto vs, let vs notwithstanding content our selues with this, that after his death he was raised to a more high degree of honour. For that which is yet wanting, shall at the last bee accomplished in his time.

But in the first place, some are offended that the Apostle doth ouer nicely gather that all things should not as yet be subiect vnto Christ, because *Dauid* meant to comprehend all things generally. For the kindes of creatures which hee afterwards reckoneth vp, shewes nothing of all this: to wit, the beasts of the field, the fishes of the sea, and the birds of the ayre. I answered, that one generall sentence is not to bee restrained to these kindes, because *Dauids* meaning was onely to shew some examples of this lordship in those things which doe most ordinarily present themselues before our eyes: or rather to the least things, that wee might know nothing is ours but by the bountie of God, and by the participation of Christ. Wherefore wee may thus resolue this sentence, *Thou hast put all things vnder him*, not onely the things which serue to eternall blessednes, but also euen those lesser things which serue for the vse and benefit of the bodie. Howsoever, it is certaine, that this inferiour lordship over the creatures depends vpon a superiour. Hereupon some make this question; how is it that we see not yet all things subiect vnto Christ? But wee shall finde a solution to this question in the place of *Paul* before alleaged: and we haue also somewhat touched the same in the beginning of this Epistle. Christ hath yet continuall warre with diuers enemies, and therefore he is not yet in very deede in the peaceable possession of his kingdome. Now he is not constrained to hold this warre by any necessitie, but voluntarily: for in that his enemies are not subdued vntill the last day, it is to the end we in the meane while might be daily tried by such exercises.

Question.

Answer.

Verse 9.

Iesus, which was made a little inferiour to the Angels.] Because the signification of the Greeke word which wee translate, *a little*, is ambiguous (for it may either bee referred to the time, or to the manner of this abasement) he hath more regard to the thing in it selfe such as it was in the person of Christ, than to the true and natural exposition of the words, as I haue already said: wherein he giues vs occasion to consider of that glorie in the resurrection, which *Dauid* extends to all the gifts wherewith man is adorned by Gods liberalitie towards him. Yet it is not inconuenient that the Apostle doth thus applie the words of the Prophet, because hee leaues the literal sense still whole and sound. That which he saith, *by the suffering of death*, is as much as if it had bin said, that Christ in enduring of death, was exalted into this glorie which he obtained, as *S. Paul* in like manner shewes in the second to the Philippians, vers. 8. not that Christ gat vnto himselfe some particular thing, as the Sophisters forge, who say that he first of all merited eternall life for himselfe, and afterward for vs. For this manner of speech is onely to shew by what meanes he obtained his glorie. But why was Christ crowned with glorie? To the end euery knee should bow before him, *Philip. 2. 10.* Wherefore it may be concluded from the finall cause, that all things were giuen into his hands.

That by the grace of God he might tast of death for all men.] Hee recites the cause and fruite of Christs death, that wee should not thinke it any way diminished his dignitie. For when we heare that so great a benefit is obtained for vs by his death, there is no place left for contempt, because the admiration of the diuine goodnesse doth wholly raiuish vs. Where hee saith, *for all*, hee not onely meaneth, that it should serue as an example to all, as *Chrysostome* brings in the similitude of the Physition, who first tasteth himselfe of the bitter potion, to the end the patient should make no difficultie at all to drinke it vp: but the Apostles meaning is that Christ died for vs, because hee setting himselfe in our place, hath deliuered vs from the curse of death. And therefore

fore he addes that it is done *by the grace of God*, because the cause of our redemption was the infinite loue of God, which caused him not to spare his onely begotten sonne, Rom. 8. 32. Whereas *Chrysostome* expounds to *feele death*, in stead of *to taste* thereof (as you would say with the tip of the lips) because Christ obtained victorie ouer death: I doe neither reiect nor disallow it: notwithstanding I will not affirme that the Apostle meant to speake so subtilly.

10 For it became him, for whom are all these things, and by whom are all these things, seeing that he brought many children vnto glorie, that he should consecrate the Prince of their saluation through afflictions.

11 For he that sanctifieth and they which are sanctified are Psal. 12. 13. all of one: Wherefore he is not ashamed to call them brethren.

12 Saying, I will declare thy name vnto my brethren: in Psal. 18. 3. the midst of the Church will I sing praises vnto thee.

13 And againe, I will put my trust in him. And againe, Isai. 8. 18. Behold here am I, and the children which God hath giuen me.

THe point whereunto the Apostle aimeth, is to make the abiection of Christ glorious in the eyes of the faithfull. For when he saith that he clothed himselfe with our flesh, it seemes he meant to set Christ among the common order of men. And then the crosse being added, it abaseth him below all sorts of men. Wherefore good heede must be taken that Christ bee not the lesse esteemed, because that of his owne good will he made himselfe of none account for our sakes. And this is the point which is now handled in this text. For the Apostle shewes that euen for this cause the Sonne of God ought to be honourably esteemed; in regard he was thus consecrated to bee the Prince of our saluation. First of all he takes it for granted, that Gods ordaining of it ought to bee rested in, because that as all things are sustained by his power, so ought they also to serue to his glorie. Wherefore wee ought to seeke no better cause than this; It so pleased God. Hereunto appertaines that circumlocution

Christ must not be the lesse esteemed, because he willingly abased himselfe for our sakes.

of words which hee vseth: *By whom, and for whom are all things*: hee might in one word haue named God; but his meaning was to shew that wee must hold and esteeme that to be chiefly good, which God hath ordained and appointed, whose will and glory is the very right end of all things. Yet notwithstanding it seemes that which hee would say is not yet fully prooued, to wit, that it was conuenient that Christ should be consecrated after this manner. But this depends vpon the ordinarie course which God is wont to hold in his dealing with those that are his. For his will is they should be exercised with diuers miseries, and that their whole life should bee a continuall crosse. It was necessarie then that Christ, as hee was the first borne, should be consecrated by the crosse, thereby entring into his principalitie; because it is the rule and common condition of all. This is the conformitie of the head with the members, whereof S. Paul entreateth, Rom. 8. 29.

Now it is a singular consolation to assuage and sweeten the bitternes of the crosse, when the faithfull doe heare that they are sanctified vnto glorie together with Christ by miseries and tribulations: and that in very deed they doe perceiue there is good cause why they should embrace the crosse amiably, rather than fearefully. Which cannot bee brought to passe, vnlesse this shame of the crosse bee by and by swallowed vp, and the glorie that thereby comes vnto them doth also shine forth. For who will despise that which is sacred; yea that which euen God himselfe hath sanctified? Who will esteeme that to bee reprochfull wherewith we are prepared vnto glorie? Now both the one and the other is here affirmed of the death of Christ. *By whom are all things*. When it is spoken of the creation, this is attributed to the Son as a thing which is proper vnto him, to wit, that all things were created by him: but the Apostle signifies nothing els in this place, but that all creatures are standie and vpholden in their estate by the power of God. Whereas we haue turned the word, *to consecrate*, others haue put, *to make*. But for as much as the Greeke word which the Apostle vseth

seth hath diuers significations, I thinke it is very cleere, that mine exposition agrees best to the scope of the text. For he notes here a solemne and lawfull consecration, by which the children of God are brought in to obtaine their degree, yea euen to bee separated from the rest of the world: and mention also is by and by after made, of sanctification.

For he which sanctifieth, and they which are sanctified, &c.] Verse 11.

He proues that that which he hath said ought to be accomplished in the person of Christ, by reason of the coniunction which is between him and his members. And in the meane while hee shewes that it is a singular testimonie of Gods goodnes that Christ hath taken our flesh. He saith then that the author of holines, and wee which are partakers of the same *are all of one*; that is to say, of one nature, as I for mine owne part doe interpret it. It is commonly vnderstood of *Adam*. Some doe referre it to God; but altogether without reason. For I thinke it rather to be meant of one nature: as if he should say, made and framed of one lumpe. Now this serues greatly to augment our confidence and assurance; to wit, that we are ioyned to the Sonne of God by so streight a bond, that wee may finde the very same holines in our nature, whereof we stand in neede. For he doth not onely sanctifie vs as he is God, but the proprietie to sanctifie is also in his humane nature: not that the humanitie hath this vertue of it selfe, but because God hath shed into it a perfect fulnes of holines, to the end we should all draw our holines from thence. To which, this sentence hath respect, *For their sakes I sanctifie my selfe*, Ioh. 17. 19. Thus then if wee be prophane and vncleane, we neede not seeke that remedie farre off, which is offered vs in our owne flesh. If any had rather take it of the vnity in the Spirit (which is farre otherwise betweene the faithfull and the Sonne of God than it is commonly betweene men) I doe not gainsay it. Notwithstanding I willingly follow that which is the most receiued; seeing it is not contrarie to reason.

Do we at any time see our selues vnclean? we neede not seeke farre for the remedie, for it is in our owne flesh.

For which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.]

This place here alleaged is taken out of the two and twenty Psalme.

Psalme. Now that Christ is there brought in speaking, or *David* in the person of Christ, wee haue first of all the Euangelists for witnesses, who doe alleage many verses of this Psalme: as namely these, They parted my garments among them: They gaue me gall for my drinke: Also, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Afterwards euen the thing it selfe sheweth it. For in the historie of the passion, we may see a liuely image of all things there mentioned. And the conclusion of the Psalme, which is the vocation of the Gentiles, cannot be referred to any other than to Christ. All the ends of the earth shall turne vnto God, and all the families of the Gentiles shall bow before him: The kingdome is the Lords, and he shall rule ouer the Gentiles. The truth of all these things is only in Christ, who did not enlarge Gods kingdome in little or narrow places, as *David* did, but hath spread it through the world, whereas it was before shut vp within certaine bounds and limits. Wherefore this place here alleaged is also questionlesse spoken of him, which he doth very fitly; and vseth a most significant word when he saith, *he is not ashamed*. For how great is the difference which is betweene him and vs? Surely hee humbled himselfe very low, when hee vouchsafed to call vs his brethren: who otherwise had bin vtterly vnworthie to be esteemed so much as his vassals. The circumstance also doth greatly amplifie this wonderfull fauour of his towards vs. For Christ speaks in that place, not as a mortall man in the shape of a seruant, but as being clothed with immortall glorie after his resurrection. Wherefore this title is no lesse excellent, than if hee had carried vs vp into heauen with him. As oft therefore as we heare that Christ calles vs *brethren*, let vs remember hee doth after a sort clothe vs with this qualitie, that with the name of *brethren* we might also apprehend the blessed life, with all the heauenly benefits contained therein.

*It is no small
honour that
Christ doth vs,
in calling vs
his brethren.*

Verse 12.

Moreouer, it is to be noted what office Christ takes vpon him, to wit, *to declare the name of God*: which began at the publishing of the Gospel, and is daily continued by the office of the Pastors. Whence we gather, that when the Gospel

pell is preached, it is to bring vs to the knowledge of God, to the end his goodnes might be magnified and extolled amongst vs. Also we may note, that Christ is the author of the Gospel, howsoever it is offered vnto vs onely by men. And that is it which S. Paul saith, 2. Cor. 5. 20. that hee, and the rest of the Ministers are Ambassadors for Christ: when they doe beseech vs in the stead of Christ to be reconciled to God. Which ought to affect vs with great reuerence towards the Gospel. For truly we are not to thinke that they are men which speake, but Christ rather by their mouth. For euen then when hee promised to preach the name of God vnto men, hee ceased to conuerse with them in the world, and yet questionlesse he attributes not this office vnto himselfe for nothing. He hath therefore fully accomplished it by his Apostles and Ministers.

Christ the author of the Gospel.

In the midst of the congregation.] It yet appeares more manifestly by this, that the publishing of the praises of God, is alwaies contained in the Gospel. For as soone as it is giuen vs of God to know him; infinite are his praises which doe sound in our hearts and eares. Let vs also note herewithall that Christ by his example doth exhort vs to sing these praises publikely, in such wise as they may bee heard of many. For it is not sufficient that euery one of vs apart should giue thanks for the benefits wee haue receiued of God, vnlesse by testifying the same our thankfulnes openly, we do thereby mutually stirre vp one another to doe the like. And verily this doctrine is as a sharpe goad in our sides to pricke vs forward to praise God with a more ardent affection of heart, seeing we heare that Christ singeth first, and doth as it were giue vs the tune to make vs sing after him.

And againe, I will trust in him.] Seeing this sentence is contained in the 18. Psalm, vers. 3. we neede not doubt but it is taken out thence. For besides that verse which S. Paul alleageth, Rom. 15. 9. applying it to the kingdom of Christ, touching the vocation of the Gentiles, the order of the argument thereof sufficiently shewes that *Daniel* there speaks vnder the person of another. For wee shall scarcely see the least

Verf. 13.

Psal. 18. 50.

least shadow of that great and excellent maiestie in *David*, which is there set forth with most magnificent termes. He boasts himselfe to haue been placed the head ouer the nations: and that euen strangers, and such as knew him not should of themselves submit their necks vnder him at the onely hearing of his renowme. Now *David* indeed with force of armes conquered some people which were neighbors & very well knowne, and made them tributaries vnto him: but what is this in regard of the conquests of many other Kings besides? Moreouer, where is that voluntarie subiection? where are the people so farre off, that hee should not know them? In a word, where is that solemne publishing of the grace of God among the Gentiles, whereof the conclusion of the Psalmes makes mention? It is Christ then vndoubtedly who is ordained to be the head ouer diuers nations, to whom strangers should submit themselves euen from the ends of the earth, and that onely by being moued with the report of him, that is to say, being touched with the hearing of the word. For they are not constrained to receiue his yoke by force of armes, but being subiected by force of the doctrine, they willingly offer themselves to obey him. We do also see in the Church that same fained and dissembling profession, whereof the Psalmes speaketh. For many in all times doe professe themselves to bee of Christ; but it is not from the heart. Let vs hold this then as a thing certaine, that the text of this Psalmes which the Apostle alleageth is fitly and properly expounded of Christ. But what is all this to the present purpose? For although Christ doe trust in God, it seemes it should not therefore follow that wee and Christ are one. I answer, the argument is good: for if so be hee had not been a man subiect to humane necessities, he should haue had no neede of such trust. Seeing therefore that himselfe depends vpon the helpe of God, he hath the same condition with vs. Truly it is not in vaine or for nothing that wee are so commaunded to trust in God: for without faith we are vtterly miserable, and poore wretched creatures. The trust then which we put in God, is a testifying of our puer-

tie

Obiection.

Answer.

tie and want. Howbeit in one point we differ from Christ: that is to say, hee did voluntarily submit himselfe to those infirmities; which are imposed vpon vs by necessitie. Yet this ought greatly to imbolden vs to trust in God, because we haue Christ for our Captaine and Master. For who shall feare to goe astray following his steps? We neede not feare, I say, that our faith which wee haue in common with Christ should be in vaine, seeing we know it cannot be deceiued.

Behold here am I and the children &c.] It is very certaine that *Isaiab* in this eight chapter speakes of himselfe. For howsoeuer it be true that he giues the people hope of their deliuerance, and that the promise which hee published was not receiued as a thing of any certaintie: yet to the end the infidelitie and obstinacy of the people should be no discouragement vnto him, the Lord commaunds him to seale vp that doctrine which he had taught, among a very few of the faithfull. And it is as much as if hee had said, the doctrine which thou hast deliuered is reiecte of the greater part, yet there are some notwithstanding (although a little handfull indeede) which will receiue it. *Isaiab* staying himselfe vpon this answer, takes courage againe vnto him, and protesteth that he and the disciples which God hath giuen him, are alwaies readie to follow God. Now it remaines to shew how the Apostle applies this sentence to Christ. First of all, there is no man of sound iudgement which will denie, but that which is there spoken as touching the Lord, who should be a stone of offence to the kingdome of Iudah and Israel, was fulfilled in Christ. And in very trueth, like as the returne and deliuerance out of the captiuitie of Babylon, was as a beginning and figure of that principall deliuerance which was archieued vnto vs and to the fathers by the outstretched arme of Christ: so also there were then so few euen among the Iewes which enioyed this benefit of God; that onely a small remnant were saued. Now that was a foretelling as it were and a signe of their blinding which was to ensue: by which it is now come to passe that in reiecting of Christ, they haue therewithal reiecte God also, and haue worthily perished.

perished. For we must note that the promises as touching the restauration of the Church, whereof the Prophets make mention; began when the Iewes were brought out of captiuitie, and doth also reach euen to the kingdome of Christ. As also the Lord himselfe in bringing backe the people from thence, had this end, that the Church should continue euen to the comming of his sonne, by whome at the last it was truely and firmly established. Seeing it is so, God speakes not onely to *Isai*, when he commands him to seale vp the law and the testimonie: but in his person he commands the same to all the Ministers of his word, who should fight against the incredulitie of the people: and therefore it especially belongs to Christ, who should be assayled of the Iewes with a more obstinate and furious rebellion, than all the Prophets were which were before him. Nay doe we not see that those who haue succeeded Israel, and call themselves by the name of Christians, haue not onely reiected his Gospel, but doe also furiously set themselves against him? But howsoeuer the doctrine of the gospel be esteemed a stone of offence to those that are in the bosome of the Church, yet God will not haue it fall to ruine for all that; but will rather command it to be sealed vp among his Disciples. And Christ in the name of all the Doctors, as their head, or rather as the onely Doctor who guides vs by their ministry, pronounceth that although we see such a desperate vnthankfulnesse in the world, yet there shall alwaies be some which shall yield themselves obedient vnto God. Thus you see how this place of *Isaiah* is fitly applied vnto Christ. And thereupon the Apostle gathers that we are one with him, because he associates vs with himselfe, when he offers himselfe, and vs together with him, to his father. For they who obey God vnder one and the same rule of faith, make also one selfe same bodie. Could any thing be said more properly for the praise of faith, than when we are made companions with the sonne of God, who exhorts vs by his example, and shewes vs the way? Wherefore if we followe the word of God, we knowe assuredly that we haue

haue Christ for our guide: contrariwise those who turne from the obedience of the word, doe nothing at all belong to Christ. Is there any thing, I pray you, more desirable than this: to wit, that we consent with the Sonne of God? Now this consent and agreement consists in faith: it follows therefore, that by infidelitie we dissent from Christ, which is the most detestable thing that can be. This word *children*, which in many places of the scriptures signifies as much as seruants, is taken here for Disciples.

Which God hath giuen me:] In these words is noted out vnto vs the first cause of obedience, to wit, that God hath adopted vs to himselfe. Christ brings none to the father but those whome he hath giuen him. Now we know that this donation depends vpon the Eternal Election: because those whome the father hath ordained vnto life, those he commits to the tuition of his sonne, to the end he may conserue and keepe them. And that is it which he saith, *Ioh. 6. 37. All that the father hath giuen me, shall come vnto me.* Therefore when we feele that we can submit our selues vnto God in obedience of faith, let vs learne to attribute it wholly vnto his mercie, because we would neuer otherwise haue submitted our selues to be brought to him by the hand of Christ. Moreouer this doctrine doth furnish vs with singular matter of Confidence; for who would tremble vnder the protection and safegard of Christ? who is he that hauing such a keeper would not boldly despise all danger? And truly when Christ saith, *Behold me, and my children*, he fulfils that indeed, which he elsewhere promiset, That he will not suffer any of those whome he hath receiued of his father to perish. *Ioh. 10. 28.* Lastly, let vs note from hence, that although the world doe furiously reiect the Gospel, yet notwithstanding the sheepe of Christ will alwaies acknowledge the voyce of their shepheard. Wherefore let vs not be dismaied, though almost all people and nations of the world doe reiect it; seeing Christ will gather those that are giuen into his custodie. If the Reprobate plunge themselues into death by their impietie, the plants which God hath not planted are thereby

thereby plucked vp, *Matth. 15. 13.* In the meane while let vs not doubt but that he knowes his own, and that the saluation of them all is sealed vp in him, to the ende none should escape him. *The foundation of God remaines sure, and hath his scale, The Lord knowes who are his. 2. Tim. 2. 19.* Let vs then content our selues with this scale.

14 *For as much as the childre are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himselfe likewise tooke part with them that he might destroy through death, him that had the power of death, that is, the Diuell.*

15 *And that he might deliuer all them, which for feare of death were all their life time subiect vnto bondage.*

Verse 14.

FOr as much then as the children:] This is the conclusion of that which hath beene said; and therewithall he doth more fully giue a reason of that which he had but lightly touched before concerning the cause, why it behoued the sonne of God to take our flesh: to wit, that he might partake of the same nature with vs, & in dying might redeeme vs from death. This place is worthy to be wel obserued: because it not onely confirms the truth of Christ his humane nature, but also shewes what fruit comes vnto vs thereby. *The sonne of God, saith he, was made man; to the ende he might participate the same nature and condition with vs.* Could he say any thing more to the purpose for the confirmation of our faith? for by this it appeares that he loues vs with an vn-speakable loue. The fulnesse of which loue consists in this, that he tooke vpon him our nature; that he might thereby subiect himselfe to the condition of death, for as he was God he could not die. Now howsoeuer he toucheth the fruit of his death but in fewe words, yet notwithstanding in these few he doth expresse the matter, with wonderfull life and efficacie: how? he hath so kept vs from the tyrannie of the diuell, that we are out of his danger: and hath so redeemed vs from death, that we need not now feare it any more. But because there is no word which hath not his weight, let

vs yet a litle more diligently examine them. First this *destruction of the deuill*, whereof he speaks, shewes, that he hath now no more power ouer vs. For howsoeuer the deuill hath force and power still, and deuiseeth daily to worke our destruction, yet notwithstanding the power which he hath to hurt vs is weakened, or at the least limited. And doubtlesse it is a great consolation, to be assured that we haue to doe with such an enemy as hath no power ouer vs. Now that this is said in regard of vs; we may gather by the member following, *which had the power of death*, for the Apostle would hereby giue vs to vnderstand, that the deuill is destroyed, in as much as he reigned to our destruction. For this power is so called because of the effect; for it is deadly to vs, and brings forth destruction. He shewes then that not onely the tyrannie of Satan is destroyed by the death of Christ, but also that Satan himselfe hath receiued such a wound, that we need now no more to feare him, then if he were not at all. He speaks of the *Deuill* in the singular number, according to the custome of the Scriptures: not that we should imagine there is no more but one, but because all of them together make one body, which cannot be as we know, without an head.

The Diuels power weakened and limited.

All those which for feare of death] This place doth very notably describe how miserable their state and condition is who stand in feare of death: doubtlesse it must be very horrible and terrible to as many as look vpon it without Christ; because without him nothing is to be perceiued therein but cursednes. For from whence comes death but from the wrath of God inkindled against sinne? thence comes this bondage all our life long: that is to say, that anguish and continuall disquietnes wherein poore soules are imprisoned. For the iudgement of God doth alwaies present it self before our eyes by the knowledge and guilt of sinne: now Christ by bearing our curse vpon him hath freed vs from this feare, when he tooke away whatsoeuer was fearefull in death. For howsoeuer necessitie bee laid vpon vs to passe through death, yet notwithstanding both in life and in

Death must needs be terrible to as many as looke vpon it without Christ.

*We haue
peace both in
life and in
death, because
Christ is our
guide.
He hath profi-
ted but little
that hath not
learned to con-
temne death.*

death wee are at peace, and secure; because we haue Christ for our guide. And if any cannot quiet his minde by the contempt of death, let him know that he hath profited very little as yet in the faith of Christ. For as too seruile a feare proceedes from the not knowing the grace of Christ; so is it a certaine and sure note of infidelitie in whomsoever it is. *Death* in this place doth not onely signifie the separation of the soule from the bodie, but also the punishment which is sent vs of God in his anger: so as this word comprehends euen eternall damnation it selfe. For where the fault and transgressions stand in Gods sight vntaken away, there doth hell also forthwith present it selfe.

16 *For he in no sort tooke on him the Angels nature, but he tooke on him the seede of Abraham.*

17 *Wherefore in all things, it behooued him to be made like vnto his brethren, that hee might be mercifull, and a faithfull high Priest in things concerning God, that hee might make reconciliation for the sinnes of the people.*

18 *For in that he suffered and was tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.*

FOr in no sort] By this comparison hee further enlargeth the honour and benefit which Christ hath done vs in taking of our flesh, for hee neuer did so much for the Angels. In as much then as there was greater neede of speciall remedie to repaire that exceeding fearefull ruine of mankinde, it was the good pleasure of the Sonne of God herein to manifest the excellent and incomparable pledge of the loue hee bare vs, which might not be communicated; no nor to the Angels themselues. Now in that hee hath preferred vs before the Angels, was it for any excellencie that was in vs aboue them? No in no wise, but onely in regard of our miserie. Wherefore there is no cause why we should glorie as if we were more excellent than the Angels, vnlesse it be because the heavenly Father hath shewed more mercie to vs than he hath done to them: the which wee haue good cause to confesse, to the end the Angels with admiration may behold from aboue so great bountie powred forth vpon the earth.

earth. Whereas he saith in the present tence, *he takes not, or took not*, I referre it to the testimonie of the Scriptures, as if it did represent that before our eyes which had been before witnessed by the Prophets. Moreouer, this onely place sufficeth to ouerthrow *Marcion*, the *Maniches*, and all such railers, who denie Christ to be true man, begotten of mans seede. For if he onely bare the figure of a man; he often appeared so in old time vnder the forme of an Angell, and then where was the difference? But because it cannot be affirmed that euen Christ was indeede a very Angell clothed with their nature: therefore it is rather said that hee tooke the nature of man, than of the Angels. The Apostle therefore speakes of this *nature*, and shewes that Christ hauing taken flesh, was true man, so as now in two natures there is the vnitie of the person. For this place doth nothing at all fauour *Nestorius*, who forged two Christs, as if the Sonne of God had not been true man, but had onely dwelt in the flesh of man. We see that the Apostle had a farre other meaning. For hee meant to shew that wee haue a brother in the person of God, because of the participatiō of one selfe same nature with vs. Wherefore not contenting himselfe to call him man, he saith he was begotten of the *seed of man*. He expressly names *the seed of Abraham*, to get the more credit to that which he saith, because it is taken out of the Scripture.

Wherefore in all things it became him] We must consider Vers. 17.
 two things in Christ his humane nature: that is to wit, the 1
 essence of the flesh, and the affections. And therefore the A- 2
 postle teacheth that he did not onely take flesh, but also all
 those affectiōs which are proper to men. He shewes also the
 fruites proceeding from thence, the which is the true doctrine
 of faith: to wit, when wee feele in our selues the cause
 why the Sonne of God tooke our infirmities. For what is all
 the knowledge that wee can possibly haue, if wee feele not
 this fruite? In the next place hee teacheth that Christ was
 subiect to humane passions, *to the end he might be a mercifull*
and a faithfull high Priest. The which words I expound thus,
 to the end he might bee mercifull, and so by consequence Mercifull.

faithfull. For in an high Priest, whose office is to appease the wrath of God, to succour the miserable, to raise vp them that are false, and to comfort the wearie; mercie is exceeding necessarie, which the feeling of the same things begetteth in vs. For it will neuer be that those who are alwaies at their ease, should bee touched with the anguish of another. For doubtlesse that which *Virgil* the Latine Poet saith, is taken from the ordinarie custome of men.

Knowing what grieve is in mine heart,

I learne to pitie anothers smart.

Not that the Sonne of God had any neede to be instructed, or framed to a mercifull affection by hauing experience of our troubles and afflictions: but because wee could not be perswaded of his gentle and inclinable affection to helpe vs, vnlesse he had been exercised with our miseries. For this, as all the rest was done in regard of vs. As often then as we are pressed with any kinde of calamitie whatsoeuer, let vs remember that nothing befallles vs whereof the Sonne of God hath not experience in himselfe, that hee might haue compassion vpon vs: and let vs not doubt but that he will assist vs euen as if hee himselfe suffered with vs. This word *faithfull*, signifies truth and vprightnes. For it is the contrarie to a dissembler, or one that dischargeth not the dutie of his office. The experience that Christ hath had of our miseries doth so bow him to compassion, that hee is carefull to entreate the helpe of God for vs. But what more? Intending to make the purgation and satisfaction for our sinnes, hee tooke our nature vpon him, to the end that we might haue in our flesh the price of our reconciliation: and last of all, that he might bring vs together with himself into the Sanctuary of God, by the right of nature which we haue together in common with him. By *the things* which should bee done *concerning God*, hee meanes whatsoeuer tends and appertaines to our reconciliation with God. Now because the first entrance in vnto God is by the liberty of faith, we haue neede of a Mediatour which may remoue all doubtings away from vs.

Faithfull.

For

For in that he suffered, &c.] Being exercised with our afflictions, saith he, hee is inclined to helpe vs : for temptation signifies in this place nothing but experience or triall : and to be able, is taken to be fit, inclined, or disposed.

CHAP. III.

1 Therefore holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly vocation, consider the Apostle and high Priest of our profession Christ Iesus:

2 Who was faithfull to him that hath appointed him, even as Moses was in all his house.

3 For this man is counted worthy of more glorie than Moses, in as much as he which hath builded the house, hath more honour than the house.

4 For every house is builded of some man, and he that hath builded all things is God.

5 Now Moses verily was faithfull in all his house as a servant, for a witnes of the things which should be spoken after.

6 But Christ is as the Sonne ouer his own house; whose house we are, if we hold fast that confidence and that reioycing of that hope vnto the end.



Wherefore holy brethren,] He closeth vp and concludeth the former doctrine with a very profitable exhortation : to wit, y the Iewes shuld be attentiuē, and bethinke themselues well in acknowledging both what Christ is, and how great he is. For when he called him heretofore the Doctor, and foueraigne high Priest; in those few words he made comparison betweene him, Moses, and Aaron : now he comprehends both the members. For hee adorne him with two titles, because he also hath two offices, and preheminences in the Church of God. Moses performed the office of a Prophet and Teacher; Aaron the office of the high Priest : but both estates were giuen to Christ. Wherefore if we will

Two offices of Christ,

*The only way
to secure the
calling of the
faithfull, is to
shroud them-
selues vnder
the wings of
Christ.*

receiue him as we ought, we must consider what he is: we must I say, cloath him with his vertue and power, least in stead of him we take some vaine shadow and imagination of Christ. First of all, this word *Consider*, hath his weight: for it signifies that diligent attention is to be given to this matter, because it cannot be contemned without a fearefull punishment ensuing: and then that the true knowledge of Christ sufficeth to chase away, yea to cause all darknes and errors to vanish. Now to the end he might quicken them vp to a more earnest affection and studie; he admonisheth the of their own *vocation*; as if he should say, God hath not done you a small fauour in calling you to his kingdome. It remaines then that you fixe your eies vpon Christ, as vpon your leader and guide in the way. For the calling of the faithfull can no other way be secured, vnlesse they wholly gather themselues vnder Christ. And therefore let vs not imagine that this is said onely to the Iewes, but that it is a generall doctrine propounded to all those who desire to come to the kingdome of God. Let such looke diligently to Iesus, because he is the onely master of our faith, & hath confirmed it by his sacrifice. For *Confession* is here taken for faith. And it is as much as if he had said, that the faith which we seeme to hold is vaine and vnprofitable, vnlesse it be applied to Christ.

Verse 2.

Who was faithfull.] This is a Commendation of the Apostleship of Christ; to the ende that the faithfull might rest theselues securely in him. Now he commends it two waies:
 1. first because the heavenly father hath ordained him for our
 2. teacher: secōdly, in that Christ for his part hath faithfully executed the office enioyned him of his father. These two things are alwaies necessarie to get authoritie to the doctrine. For God only ought to be heard, as the whole scriptures doth testifie. For this cause Christ protesteth, that the doctrine which he brings is not his, but his fathers: *Iob. 7. 16.* And in another place he saith, *he that receiueth me, receiueth him that sent me. Luk. 9. 48.* For we speake of Christ, who as he is cloathed with our flesh, is the minister and seruant of

A lawfull calling.

of God, to declare those things vnto vs which are given him in charge. Now as the calling of Christ is of God, so besides that, he doth also carrie himselfe faithfully and sincerely in the same; which is a thing requisite in all true ministers, to the end they may haue audience and authoritie in the Church. Now if both are to be found in Christ, then assuredly we cannot despise them, but God in all of them must of necessitie be despised. *As Moses was.* Leauing a little his speech of the Priesthood, he comes now to deale with the Apostleshippe. For although the couenant of God containes two parts: to wit, the setting forth of the doctrine, and the reall confirmation thereof, if we may so speake: the exact perfection of the Couenant should not otherwise be fulfilled of Christ, vnlesse both of them doe appertaine vnto him. The Author of this Epistle then hauing made mention of the one, and the other, he hath also at the last by a brieft exhortation quickened vp the faithfull to attention. But he entreth now into a more large treatise, and fuller handling of these things, and beginneth at the charge and office of the Doctour: therefore also he compares him with *Moses* onely. Whereas he saith *in all his house*, it may be referred to *Moses*: but I had rather referre it to Christ, to the end he may be said to be faithfull to his father in the whole gouernment of his house. From whence it followes that none are to be accounted of the Church of God, but those who acknowledge Christ.

*Faithfulnesse
in performing
the worke of
this calling.*

For this man is counted worthy, &c. Least he might be thought to make *Moses* equall with Christ, he shewes how he is much more excellent then *Moses*, which he prooues by two arguments, for *Moses* was so appointed ouer the Church, that himselfe was alwaies a part and member thereof: But Christ beeing the matter builder, was farre aboue the building. *Moses* in gouerning of others, was also gouerned himselfe, because he was but a seruant: but Christ because he is the sonne obtained the principalitie. It is an vsuall metaphor both common and familiar in the scripture, to call the Church the house of God, *1. Tim. 3. 15.* Now be-

cause it is composed and built of the faithfull, therefore euery of them is called a liuing stone. 1. *Pet.* 2.5. and sometimes also vessels and instruments by which the house is decked and garnished. 2. *Tim.* 2.20. There is not any one which is so absolute ouer others, that himselfe in the meane while should not be a member and comprehended vnder the bodie. God onely is he which buildeth, and ought to be preferred farre aboue his building and worke. Now God dwelleth in Christ, so as whatsoeuer is said of God, appertaines vnto him. If any shall obiect and say, that Christ also is part of the building, because he is the foundation of it, in regard he is our brother, and hath societie with vs; moreouer in that he is not the master workman, but himselfe also was formed of God: we can easily giue a solution: to wit, that our faith is so built vpon him, that he notwithstanding is established the head ouer vs: that he is so our brother, that yet he is also our Lord: that he is so formed of God, beeing man, that yet notwithstanding he quickeneth and restoreth all things by his spirit, as he is the eternall God. The Scripture vseth diuers Metaphors and similitudes to declare what the grace of Christ is towards vs: but there is not any one place that doth diminish ought from his honour, whereof the Apostle now speakes. For this is the point; all ought to be gouerned and made subiect, because all must be vnder the head: Christ is therefore exempt from this condition, because he is the head. If it be againe obiected that *Moses* was no lesse a master builder than *S. Paul*, who giues himselfe this title, 1. *Cor.* 3. 10. I answer, that this name is indeed attributed to the Prophets and Teachers, but improperly: for they are but organes and instruments; yea dead instruments, vnlesse the Lord from heauen do secretly inspire the efficacie of his spirit. And furthermore that they so labour to edifie & build the Church, that themselues also must come to be framed into the building, as beeing part of the same: but it is farre otherwise with Christ. For he hath alwaies built the Church by the power of his own spirit. Moreouer he hath alwaies bene the cheife, yea the highest, farre aboue the

Obiection.

Answer.

Obiection.

Answer.

the common order of others; for, he was so the true temple of God, that therewithall himselfe was the God which dwelt in it.

And he that hath built all things, &c.] Although the words Verse 4. may be stretched to the creation of the whole world, yet notwithstanding I reſtaine them to the preſent matter, ſo as we vnderſtand, that nothing was done in the Church, that ought not to be acknowledged to proceed from the power of God. For it is he onely who hath made it with his hand: *Pſal. 87. 5.* And *S. Paul* ſaith of Chriſt, that he is the head by whom all the bodie linked and coupled together by euery loynt for the furniſhing thereof, taketh increaſe according to the operation, in the meaſure of euery part. *Eph. 4. 15.* For this cauſe he ſaith often, that the fruit of his miniſtry is a worke of God. To be ſhort, if we iudge as the truth is, although God doe vſe men as the meanes to build his Church, yet it is he onely notwithstanding which doth perfect all things: for the inſtrument diminiſheth nothing from the praiſe of the workeman.

Now Moſes verily was faithfull, &c.] This is the ſecond Verse 5. difference, the doctrine was committed to *Moſes*, but ſo, as he himſelfe ſtill was ſubiect thereunto as well as others. But howſoeuer Chriſt tooke vpon him the forme of a ſeruant, yet he is Lord and Maſter notwithstanding, vnder whom euery knee is to bow: *Philip. 2. 10.* He was appointed heire ouer all things, as we heard in the firſt chapter of this *Epistle*. For a witneſſe of the things, &c. I expound theſe words plainly thus, *Moſes* as an Herald and a publiſher of this doctrine, which ſhould be maniſeſted to the auncient people according as the time would beare; did alſo therewithall giue witneſſe to the Goſpel, for the preaching whereof the fit time was not yet come. For truly it is very apparant that this perfection of wiſdome which is contained in the Goſpel, is the ende and accompliſhment of the law; and it ſeemes that the Greeke word which is in the future tence, which we translate *ſhould be ſpoken*, or which were to be ſpoken, requireth this expoſition. Now the ſumme is, that *Mo-*

for did faithfully teach the people those things which God had giuen him in charge; yet so, as a certaine measure was limited, beyond which it was not lawfull for him to passe. God hath heretofore spoken vnto vs diuers waies, and at sundrie times by the Prophets, yet he deferred the cleere reuelation of the Gospel to the fulnesse of time.

Verse 6.

Whose house we are.] The Apostle *Paul* in the 1. to the Romans, after he had told them in his Preface, that he was appointed the Apostle of the Gentiles, addeth in the 6. verse, that the Romans to whom he wrote were of the number of them, and all to the ende he might obtaine authoritie with them. Euen so now doth the author of this Epistle, exhort the faithfull Iewes, who had made profession of Christ, to perseuere in the faith; to the end they might haue place in the household of God. He had said before that the house of God was vnder the rule of Christ: and now he addes this admonition to very good purpose, telling them that they shal haue a place in this house of God, if so be they obey Christ. But in regard they had before begunne to receiue the Gospel, he ioynes this condition, *if they boldfast that confidence, and that reioycing, &c.* for I take this word *hope* for faith. And truly hope is nothing els but the constancie of faith. He puts *assurance and reioycing*, the better to expresse the vertue of it. And from hence we gather that those who faintly and staggeringly doe consent vnto the Gospel, are nothing lesse then true belceuers. For faith cannot be without a quiet and peaceable minde, which brings forth a constant boldnes of reioycing. For faith indeede hath alwaies these two effects ioyned with it, to wit *boldnesse*, and *reioycing*: as we haue said in the fift to the Romans, and in the third to the Ephesians. To which, as all the doctrine of the Papists is contrarie, so if they had none other false doctrine but this alone; it would rather destroy the Church of God, then build it vp. For they not onely darken the truth, by their inuentions, but openly condemne this confidence, whereof the Apostle speakes, of presumption. As if it were not lawfull for a man to hold that he is consecrated to be the temple of God,
And

Hope, the constancie of faith

Staggerers, no true belceuers.

Two effects of faith.

And besides, what assurednes of confidence and boldnes could wee have thereof, when men know not what to beleue? Now this infolden faith, which they haue forged of their owne heads, is nothing els but a license to wander and stray out of the right way. Wee are therefore admonished out of this place alwaies to profit and to goe forward euen till death, because our whole life is but a race.

7 Wherefore (as the holy Ghost saith, to day if ye shall heare his voyce,

Psal. 95. 8.
chap. 4. 7.

8 Harden not your hearts, as in the prouocation, according to the day of temptation in the wilderness,

Numb. 14. 22.
Exod. 17. 2. 7.

9 Where your fathers tempted me, proued me, and saw my workes fourtie yeeves long.

10 Wherefore I was grieved with that generation and said, They erre euer in their heart, neither haue they knowen my waies.

11 Therefore I swaie in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest.)

12 Take heede, brethren, least at any time there be in any of you an euill heart, and vnfaithfull to depart away from the liuing God:

13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called to day, least any of you be hardened through the deceitfulnes of sinne.

HE still exhorts them to obey Christ in his word. And to the end his exhortation might haue the more weight, he confirmes it by the testimonie of David. For when hee was to touch them to the quicke, it was needfull hee should presse them in the person of another, least hee might offend them. If he had plainly reproched the infidelitie of their fathers, they would not so willingly haue heard him: but in that he sets David as it were to tell them of it, the matter is so much the lesse odious. Now his drift in few words is this, that as God from the beginning would that his voice should bee obeyed, and could not beare stubbornnes, and obstinacie, but did sharply punish it; so also at this day if we

proue

proue not good schollers vnder him, he will punish our obstinacie no lesse seuerely than hee did theirs. Moreover, the words depend one vpon another till you come to the 12. verse. To the end therefore the scope of the text may the better be vnderstood, the words which begin at the seuenth verse to the twelfth, the first of them being excepted, must be enclosed with a parenthesis. But let vs now come to the handling of euery point in order.

As saith the holy Ghost.] This serues to moue their attention more than if hee had alleaged *Dauids* name. And it is good and profitable also to accustome our selues to such manner of speaking, to the end we may be put in mind that the words which are cited out of the bookes of the Prophets, are not of men, but of God. Now because this sentence, *To day if ye will heare his voyce*, is a part of the verse that went before: some haue not translated it amisse; Would to God you would this day heare his voyce. It is certaine that *David* hauing called the Iewes the people of God and the sheepe of his pasture, doth from thence soorthwith inferre, that it is good reason they should heare the voyce of God. For speaking there to them whom hee had called to sing the praises of God, and to celebrate his goodnes, he by and by admonisheth them that obedience is the principall seruice that he requireth, and that he preferres it farre before all sacrifices. The first point is then that they should obey the word of God.

Verse 8.

None can soften the hardnes of our hearts but God only.

Harden not your hearts.] By these words is shewed that our rebellion against God proceeds from none other roote than from a voluntary wickednes: to wit, when we shut the gate against his grace. True it is that we haue already hearts of stone, and euery one of vs hath brought this hardnes with vs from our mothers wombe, neither is there any but God onely who can soften and correct them. Notwithstanding whereas wee repell the voyce of God, we doe it with a witting and willing obstinacie, and not by any other instigation: and whether this be a truth or no, let euery mans conscience testifie. Wherefore the holy Ghost doth iustly re-
proue

proue al vnbeleeuers, for opposing themselues against Godf and for that they themselues are masters and authors o their owne obstinacie: least they should lay the fault vpon some bodie els. Notwithstanding it cannot bee gathered from hence, that on the contrarie the libertie to frame our hearts to the obedience of God is in our power. For it will alwaies necessarily come to passe vnto men to harden their owne hearts, till such time as another heart be giuen them from heauen. For as we are by nature enclined to malice, so we will neuer cease to resist God, till such time as we be tamed and brought vnder by his hand.

As in the prouocation,] It was needfull for two causes that the disobedience of their fathers should be remembred vnto them. For as they were fondly puffed vp with the dignitie of their race, so often times they followed their fathers vices in stead of vertues, and tooke their example for a sufficient excuse. Moreouer, hearing that their fathers had bin so disobedient to God, they might the better know hereby that this admonition was not superfluous. Now because these two reasons had place at that time when the Apostle liued, he doth therefore willingly fit that to the present occasion which had been long agoe spoken by *Dauid*; to the end they also to whom hee addresseth his speech might not bee giuen too much to the following of their fathers steps. From hence we may gather a generall doctrine, to wit, how farre we ought to follow our fathers: that is to say, euen so farre soorth as their authoritie doth not turne vs from the onely one God. For if euer any fathers were worthie of honour, the Iewes doubtlesse obtained the first place among others. And yet notwithstanding *Dauid* giueth expresse charge to their children, to take heede how they grew like them. And for mine owne part I make no doubt but he hath regard here to that which is written in the 17. of Exodus. For *Dauid* doth here vse two words, which *Moses* shewes were giuen to the place, because of that which happened: to wit, *Meriba*, which signifies contention or strife: and *Massab*, which signifies tentation: for they tempted God, saying,

*How farre the
example of our
forefathers is
to be followed.*

saying, that he was not in the middest of them, because they lacked water, *Exod. 17. 7.* and also strife, because they contended with *Moses*. Now although they had shewed many examples of their incredulitie, *David* notwithstanding chuseth this principally, because it was the most memorable among many others: as also because that according to the order of time it followed all the rest of the temptations, at leastwise for the greater part, as wee may see by the fourth booke of *Moses* called Numbers, where there is a continual succession of many temptations from the 11. chapter to the 20. Now this is written in the twentieth; which circumstances make the offence much more hainous. For what ingratitude is it that hauing had experience of the power of God, they should yet continue to contend and strue so malapertly with him, and should giue no credit to him at all? He hath then put one kinde for all. This word to *tempt*, is taken in the ill part, as we vse to say, to distrust with despise. For although God had many times succoured them, notwithstanding forgetting all he had done for them, they asked in scorne where his vertue and power was become?

Verse 9.

And proued me, and saw my workes.] This member must be thus resolved; notwithstanding that they had proued me, and seene my workes. For he aggravates the crime of their wickednesse, because they had profited no better, though they had been taught by so many experiences. For it was a marueilous beastlines that they made none account of Gods power which was so sure and approoued. That which followeth of *fourtie yeeres*, is ioyned in the Psalmes with that which is said by consequence. For we know that the Apostles in alleaging the Scriptures had regard rather to the substance, than to be curious about words. And God himselfe also when hee complaines that this people vexed him by the space of fourtie yeeres, it was because so many benefits as hee had bestowed vpon them, had not been available to bring them vnder. For although God shewed himselfe good euery day euen to those which were vnworthis of it, yet they would not cease to rise vp in rebellion against

against him: From thence proceeded the continuall wrath of God, as if he should say, they haue not prouoked me once, or twice; but haue continued their naughtinesse fourtie yeares long. *Generation*, signifieth an age, or the men of an age.

And said, they erre alwaies, &c.] It is the sentence of God Ver. 10. by which he pronounceth that they were of a reprobate minde: and he addes the reason; to wit, because they knewe not his waies. In a word, he holds them for a desperate people, because they had lost both vnderstanding, & heart: and he here takes to him the person of a man, who hauing a long space made triall of his seruants, findes them at the last to be no better than obstinately rebellious. For he saith, *they erre alwaies*, because he saw no hope at all of amendment.

Therefore I sweare in my wrath.] This is the punishment of Ver. 11. their folly and rage, to wit, to be deprived of their promised rest. Moreouer the Lord calls that land *his rest*, in the which they should haue rested. For they had beene straungers and pilgrimes in the land of Egypt, they wandred through the desert: but the land of Canaan, should haue beene their perpetuall inheritance, according to the promise. And God calles it *his rest*, in respect of the promise: because we neuer finde a firme and stable rest, till we come where we are gathered by the hand of God. Now the right of the sure possession was grounded vpon this that God had said to *Abraham*, *I will giue this land to thy seed*, Gen. 12.7. In that God sweareth; the heinousnesse of their sinne is so much the more aggrauated with the greater vehemencie. For it is a signe that the wrath of God is the more inflamed. *They shall neuer enter*, this is a kind of oath, in which somewhat must be supplied, as an Imprecation, or some such like thing when men speake: but when God himselfe speaketh, it is as much as if he should say, let me not be taken to be true of my word, or let me not hence forth be beleeued if it be not so. Notwithstanding these manners of speaking, wherein somewhat is wanting, admonisheth vs to feare, and tremble; least:

least we presume lightly to sweare, as commonly men are wont vpon euery trifling occasion, euen with horrible execrations.

But as touching the present text, we are not to thinke that they were then first of all cast out from entring into the land, when they tempted him in Riphidim. They were excluded long before: that is, from the time that the spies brought them ill tidings, whereby they withdrew their affections from passing ouer into that land. God therefore doth not say here, that this tentation was the first cause for the which they were put by, from enioying of Canaan; but it signifies that they could scarcely be humbled by any correction, but still added sinne vpon sinne. And by this means he shewes that they had well deserued to be so rigorously dealt withall by him, because they ceased not to augment his wrath more and more by their transgressions: as if he should say, this is the generation to whom I haue denied the inioying of the land which I had promised them; who for fortie full yeares together haue shewed themselues still to be foolishly obstinate by innumerable offences.

Verse 12.

Brethren take heed lest there be in any of you, &c. I had rather retain that which the Apostle hath put word for word; *an euill heart of infidelitie*: then to seeke a periphrasis. By this he signifies that infidelitie shall be ioyned with peruerse malice, if so be after they haue tasted of Christ, they shall turne away from his faith. For he speakes to them who had already learned the rudiments of Christianitie. And therefore he by and by addes, *to depart away*. For a man cannot reuolt but he must needs break his faith. He also immediatly shews the remedie to preuent this falling away: to wit, *if they exhort one another*. For as we are all naturally inclined to that which is euill, so we haue all neede of diuers helpes to keepe vs in the feare of God. If our faith be not often repaired it will fall: if it be not heat, it will waxe cold; if it be not awakened it will fall a sleepe. He would then that they should whet vp one another by mutuall admonitions, lest Sathan by his subtile meanes should get within their hearts, and by his

Faith must often be repaired, heat, and awakened: or els it will fall, waxe cold, and become drowsy.

his seeret deceipts should turne them away from God. Which manner of speech is to be well considered. For we fall not into this mischeife, to resist God at the first chopper: but Satan makes his entrie vpon vs by little and little, till he get vs snared in his nets; and then beeing blinded, we enter into an open rebellion.

This euil therefore is to be remedied betimes: for there is not one of vs but is subiect to this danger; because none are so easily deceiued. Now from this falling away, proceeds the *hardening of the heart*. We may see by this how necessarie it is to be continually prouoked and stirred vp by exhortations. For the Apostle not onely commaunds all in generall to take heede, but he would they should be careful in such wise of the saluation of euery member, that by their negligēce they should not suffer any one of the to perish, who were once called. And herein he performes the office of a good shepheard and pastor, who ought so to watch for the saluation of the whole flocke, that in the mean time, there doe not any one of his sheepe perish for want of his care.

Whilest it is called to day.] Now he more neerely applies this sentence of *Danid* to his purpose. For he shewes that this same *to day*, whereof mention is made in the Psalmes, ought not to be onely restrained to *Danids* time, but also comprehends all that time wherein it pleaseth God to speake vnto vs. Wherefore euen as often, and as many times as it pleaseth him to open his sacred mouth to teach vs, let vs remember this wel, *To day if ye will heare his voice*. According to which, *S. Paul* teacheth, that the acceptable time in which God heares vs, is whilest the gospel is preached; then is the day of saluation wherein he will be ready to succour, 2. Cor. 6. 2. Now we ought to take this opportunitie: for if by our negligence we suffer the same to ouerslippe vs, it will be in vaine to bewaile the losse of it, when it shall be taken away from vs. And therefore Christ saith, walke whilest yee haue the light, the night will quickly approch: Ioh. 12. 35. Thus then this word *whilest*, doth couertly shew that our opportunitye

Verse 13.

It is dangerous to neglect opportunitie.

portunitie will not last alwaies, if wee bee slacke to followe God when he calles. God now knockes at our doore: if we open not vnto him, it will come to passe that hee also will shut the gate of his kingdome against vs. To be short, the sighes of those who despise that grace which is now offred vnto them, will be all too late. Therefore, seeing it is vnkowne whether God will continue his call till to morrow, let vs not delay. Hee calles *to day*, let vs by and by answer him. For there is no faith, but where there is this readines to hearken and obey.

14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we keepe sure vnto the end, that beginning, wherewith we are upholden.

Psal. 95.8.

Numb. 14.37.

15 So long as it is said, to day if ye heare his voyce, harden not your hearts, as in the pronocation.

16 For some when they heard prouoked him to anger, howbeit not all of them that came out of Egypt by Moses.

17 But with whom was he displeased fourtie yeeres? Was he not displeased with them that sinned, whose carkeffes fell in the wildernes?

18 And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but vnto them that obeyed not?

19 So we see they could not enter, because of unbelieve.

Verse 14.

It is not enough to make good beginnings, vnlesse we goe on therein to the end.

FOR we are made &c.] He praiseth them for that they had begun well: but least vnder colour of the grace they had receiued, they should giue the bridle to the carelesnes of the flesh, he saith they haue need of perseuerance. For there are some who hauing tasted of the Gospell but with the edge of the lip, yet as though they were come to the last degree of perfection, thinke they haue no neede to goe any further forward in profiting. And so it comes to passe that they doe not onely faint in the midst of their course, yea almost at their very first entrance, but they also turne head to runne the contrarie way. It is true this obiection hath a faire shew, what would ye more, are we not come to Christ? But if it be so that by faith we possesse him, we must perseuere still in it,

to the end our possession may be for euer. Thus then Christ hath giuen vs the enioying of himself vnder this condition, that wee hold fast so great a benefit till death, euen by the same faith by which wee were admitted into the participation of him.

Therefore he saith, *the beginning*, signifying thereby that faith is onely begun. Seeing the Greeke word *Hypothasis* sometimes signifieth assurance, it may be taken in this signification. Neuerthelesse, I thinke it not from the purpose to vse the word *substance*, as some others haue translated: although I doe interpret it a little otherwise. For others think that faith is called by that name, because the whole being of man without it, is nothing els but vanitie: but I say it is because we rest in it: there being none other stay whereupon wee can stand. And this epithite *sure*, agreeth thereunto very well. For we shall be sure and out of danger of falling, if so be wee be built vpon faith. The summe then is, that it behoueth that the faith whereof wee haue but the beginning, doe still goe on forward, firmly and constantly vnto the end.

So long as it is said, &c.] He signifies that the occasion to Verse 15. profit neuer failes as long as we liue, because God calles vs euery day. For although faith answeres to the preaching of the word; so euen as the vse of preaching is continuall all the course of our life, there must bee also continuall goings forward and increases in faith. These words, *so long as it is said*, doe import as much as if hee should haue said; Seeing it is so that God ceaseth not to speak, it shall not be enough once to haue receiued the Gospell with a cheerefull readiness, if we yeeld not our selues obedient, perseuering in the same teachablenes day by day euen vnto the end.

For some when they heard, &c.] *Dauid* speakes so of the Fathers, as if all those which were of that time had been vnbelieuers. Yet no doubt but there were some mingled among the wicked, that had the feare of God. The Apostle doth recount the same; but yet it is with a little asswaging of that which was spoken somewhat sharply by *Dauid*, to the end

we might know that the word is propounded generally to all, that all might obey with one consent: and that incredulitie is iustly to be condemned in all people, when the bodie is rent and shiuered by the reuolt of the greater part. Moreover whereas hee saith, that some *prouoked him to wrath*, although the number of them were farre greater than of the others; hee doth it not onely least the word should be too gaulling, but also to the end he might encourage the Iewes to follow those who beleeued. As if he should say, As God on the one side forbids you to follow the incredulitie of your fathers: so yet on the other side he proposeth the example of them that were godly, that their faith might be for you to follow. Thus he mitigates his speech, which otherwise might haue seemed somewhat too hard, if hee should haue commaunded them wholly to turne from the way of their fathers. To *come out of Egypt by Moses*, signifies by the hand, and vnder the conduct of *Moses*: because he was the minister of their deliuerance. Now this is a close comparison betweene the benefit of God conferred vnto them by *Moses*, and of the participation of Christ, whereof hee spake before.

Ver. 17.

*God is neuer
angrie without
iust cause.*

Ver. 19.

But with Whom was he displeased fourtie yeeres? His meaning is that God is neuer angrie with his people but vpon iust causes: as *S. Paul* sheweth in the tenth chapter of the first Epistle to the Corint. 5. 6. So then looke how many chastisements we reade of to bee come from God vpon the ancient people, so many hainous transgressions shall we finde whereby they prouoked the vengeance, of God to come vpon them. Alwaies bearing this in minde, that infidelitie was the chiefe and capitall sinne of all others. For howsoever he puts it in the last place, yet his meaning is that it was the first cause of the curse. And to say the truth, after they once fell to infidelitie, they neuer ceased to adde sinne vnto sinne, and from one offence to fall into another, so drawing still down vpon themselues new scourges from God. Those then who by their distrust had reiecte the possession of the land which had bin offered them, followed their owne obstinacie,

stinacie, now in coueting, now in murmuring, now in who-
ring, now in prophaning and polluting themselves with su-
perstitions, euen till their frowardnesse was fully made ma-
nifest,

This vnableefe then which they shewed from the begin-
ning, hindred them to receiue & enioy the benefit of God,
because the contempt of the word did alwaies prouoke the
to sinne. And as by their incredulitie they first deserued that
God should deprive them of that rest which he had promi-
sed them: so also all the sinnes they committed afterward,
proceeded from the same roote. But here a question may be
asked, to wit, whether *Moses* and *Aaron*, and such as they
were, are comprehended within this number. I answer, that
the Apostle rather speakes of the whole bodie in generall,
than of euery member in particular. It is certaine that there
were many of the faithfull, who either were not inwrapped
in the common impietie, or if they were, yet they did by &
by repent them of it. As for *Moses*; his faith was only sha-
ken once, and that but for a moment. Likewise there is in
the words of the Apostle, the figure called Synecdoche;
which is, when a part is taken for the whole, or the whole
for a part: which figure the scripture often vseth, as often as
there is question of a multitude, or of the bodie of a people.

Objection.

Answer.

CHAP. IV.

- 1 Let vs feare: therefore, least at any time by forsaking the promise of entring into his rest, any of you should seeme to be deprived.
- 2 For vnto vs was the Gospel preached, as also vnto them, but the word that they heard, profited not them, because it was not mixed with faith in those that heard it.

Let vs feare then. He concludes that it behooues the
Iews, to whom he writes, to feare, least they be de-
prived of the blessing which is offered them. And

Verse 1.

The care of a

good pastor.

Feare ought
not to take a-
way the assu-
rance of faith.

again he saith, *least any of you*, signifying that his affection is to bring them all to God, not one of them accepted: for such is the care of a good Pastor; that whilest he studieth for the good of the whole flocke, he is likewise watchfull ouer euery particular sheepe, that not any one of them through his default doe perish. Yea euerie one of vs ought to haue the same care ouer one another, and to feare for other mens sakes, as well as for our owne. Now this *feare* which is here recommended vnto vs, is not to take away from vs the assurance of faith; but it is to quicken vs to such great care, that by our negligence we should not become drouisie. We must feare then, not to bring vs to wauering, or distrust; as if we were vncertaine of a good euent; but least the grace of God which is offered vs, become vnprofitable vnto vs. Now when he saith, *that by forsaking the promise, we should seeme to be deprived*, he signifies, that none are deprived of it, but they who putting grace away from them, haue first renounced the same. For it is so farre off that God should repent him of his well doing, that on the contrarie he neuer ceaseth to enlarge his gifts continually, if so be there be not a contempt of his calling. This word *then*, signifies, that the falls of others ought to instruct vs to humilitie and vigilancie: as also S. Paul saith, These are fallen by vnbeleefe; be not thou high minded but feare. Rom. 11. 20.

Ver. 2.

For vnto vs was the Gospel preached.] He admonisheth vs that the very same doctrine by which God at this day calles vs vnto himselfe, and that which he ordained for the Fathers in old time, is all one. How so? to the end we might learne that the calling of God will profit vs no more than it did them, if we ratifie not the same by faith. This then is added by way of concession or granting: very true it is that the Gospel is preached to vs; but least we should bragge thereof in vaine, he replies straight way, and tels vs that the vnbeleeuers to whom God did this honour, to make them partakers of so great a benefit, yet notwithstanding felt no fruit at all by it: and in like manner, that we shall feele no blessing by it, vntill we receiue it by faith. For this cause he repeats

repeats *hearing* twice; to the end we might know that hearing will not profit vs, though we haue the Gospel preached, vnlesse faith be ioyned therewithall. Moreover here we are to note the mutuall relation which is betwene the word and faith: which is such, as the one cannot be separated from the other; for if faith be separate from the word, or the word from faith, neither of both will profit: not that the efficacie of the word depends on vs. For let the whole world be a liar, yet God notwithstanding which cannot lie, will not cease therefore to be true. Tit. 1. 2. But the word brings forth his fruite no other way in respect of vs, but when faith giues it entrance.

Hearing profits not, vnlesse faith be ioyned with it.

Faith giues the word entrance in respect of vs.

It is the power of God indeede to saluation; yet to none but the beleeuers. The righteousness of God is revealed therein, but it is from faith to faith. Rom. 1. 16. Thus it appears that we must alwaies conclude, that the word, if it be considered in it selfe, and of it owne nature hath his efficacie and is of power to saue men: but they onely which beleene doe feele the fruit. But as touching the first member, where I said, that there is no faith, where the word wanteth, & that he who goeth about to make such a diuorce, wholly quencheth faith, and brings it to nothing: it is a thing worthy to be noted. For hereby it appears, that faith can be in none but in the children of God, to whom only the promise of adoption is offered. For what faith haue the diuels, to whom there is no promise made of saluation? what faith also haue all wicked men, who know not what the word of God is? wherefore hearing must alwaies goe before faith: and that in such wise, that we well consider that it is God and not man that speaketh.

The word preached is the power of God to saluation: yet none feele the fruit but such as beleene.

No faith without a promise.

3 For we which haue beleened, doe enter into rest, as he said to the other, *As I haue sworne in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the workes were finished from the foundation of the world.*

4 For he spake in a certaine place of the seventh day on Deut. 5. 14. *this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his workes.* Gen. 2. 2.

5 And in this place againe, if they shall enter into my rest.

6 Seeing therefore it remaineth, that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached, entred not therein for their unbeleefs sake:

7 Againe he appointed in David a certaine day, by To day, after so long a time, saying, as it is said, This day if ye will heare his voyce, harden not your hearts.

8 For if Iesus had giuen them rest, then would he not after this haue spoken of another day.

9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

10 For he that is entred into his rest, hath also ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

HE beginnes now to polish and to amplifie the place of *David*, which he had alleadged; hitherunto he hath handled it according to the letter, as they say; that is, in the own naturall sense: but now he amplifies it by way of decking or polishing of it. Therefore now he rather alludes to the words of *David*, than making any interpretation of them. In the tenth to the Romans, *S. Paul* amplifies a place of *Moses* two wayes. The place is, Say not, who shall ascend vp into heauen, &c. neither is there any inconuenience, if in applying the scripture to that which is presently handled, one doe illustrate by way of similitudes that which was spoken more plainely. Now the summe of all these wordes is, that whereas God threatened in the Psalmes, to deprive them of his rest, the same threatning also appertaines vnto vs: for at this day we are called by the Gospel to a certaine kind of rest. The chiefeft difficultie of this place is from hence, that many haue offered violence vnto it, to drawe it to another sense: for the Apostle hath none other meaning, but by setting of a certaine rest before vs, to spurre vs on forward to the desire of it; as also to pricke vs on with feare, that we be not turned aside from inioying of it through infidelitie. In the meane while he shewes, that the rest into which we now enter, is of much greater excellency than that of the land of Canaan. But let vs declare the whole matter orderly.

For

For wee which haue beleued, &c.] It is an argument taken Verſ. 3.
 from the nature of things contrarie. Infidelitie onely is it
 that hindreth vs to enter: it followes then that by faith we
 doe enter thereinto. For wee muſt call to minde what hath
 been ſaid already, to wit, that God being angrie with the
 vnbeleeuers, ſware that they ſhould not enter into his reſt.
 Thoſe then enter into it, who are not hindred by infidelitie:
 provided that God doe call them. But by ſpeaking in the
 firſt perſon, hee drawes them after a more ſweete way or
 meanes; ſeparating them out of the number of ſtrangers.
Although the workes were finiſhed from the foundation of the
world. To make a definition what our reſt is, hee ſends vs to
Mofes, that is to wit, that God reſted from all his workes by
 and by after the creation of the world: and laſtly hee con-
 cludes, that the true reſt of the faithfull which ſhall endure
 for euer, is, when they are conformed vnto God. Now as it
 is indeede the chiefe felicitie of man to bee vnited with his
 God: ſo ought it alſo to be the firſt end vnto which all en-
 terpriſes, deliberations, and workes ſhould be referred. He To what end all
 proues this, becauſe God who is ſaid to haue reſted, denied our enterpriſes,
 his reſt long time after to the vnbeleeuers: which he ſhould deliberations,
 haue done in vaine and without cauſe, if thereby he had not and workes
 been willing that the faithfull ſhould alſo reſt after his ex- ought to be re-
 ample. And therefore in the ſixt verſe he ſaith, *It remaineth* ferred.
that ſome muſt enter into it: for if it be a puniſhment (as hath Verſe 6.
 been already ſaid) of infidelitie not to enter: the entrance
 then is open to the beleeuers. But that which he by and by
 after addes hath ſome more difficultie, to wit, that another
 day is assigned vnto vs in the Pſalme, becauſe the firſt were
 excluded. Now it ſeemes that *Danids* words haue no ſuch
 meaning. For they onely ſignifie that God puniſhed the in-
 fidelitie of the people, by depriving them of the poſſeſſion
 of the land. I anſwere, that the conſequence is good: to
 wit, that the ſame which was taken away from them, is offe-
 red vnto vs: ſeeing the holy Ghoſt admoniſheth vs to take
 heede that by our owne fault we be not puniſhed as they
 were. Therefore the Apoſtle rightly ſaith, that the promiſe
 is.

is renewed to the children, because the infidelitie of the fathers left the possession emprie and void: and all to this end that the children might obtaine that which the fathers despised.

Ver. 9.

For if Ioshuah had giuen them rest, &c] He denies not but *Dauid* tooketh this rest for the land of Canaan, into which *Ioshuah* brought the people: but hee denies that it was the last rest vnto which the faithfull did aspire: it being as well common to the people of that time as to vs now. Certainly they had a higher respect than vnto that land: for whereas the land of Canaan was so highly esteemed, the faithfull did it for no other cause, but in regard it was vnto them an image and pledge of the spirituall inheritance. So then, after they had obtained the possession of it, they were not to rest in the view thereof, as though they had been come to the fulnes of their desires, but were rather to meditate of the spirituall meaning thereof. Those of whom *Dauid* spake in the Psalme, enioyed the possession: but yet in the meane while they were admonished to seeke a better rest elsewhere. Wee see that the land of Canaan was a rest but onely in shadow and figure, in such wise as it was needfull for the faithfull to looke further.

Why the Iewes desired so much to enter into the land of Canaan.

We haue no such neede of shadowes and figures now, as the Iewes had.

In this sense the Apostle saith that rest was not giuen them by *Ioshuah*: because the people entred into the land vnder his conduct, to the end they might with the more cheerefull and readie affection aspire vnto heauen. And by this it is easie to gather what difference there is betweene them and vs. For although they and we haue one end set before vs vnto which we ought to aime: yet they had more externall figures, by which they were holpen: which figures we haue not, neither is it needfull wee should; seeing the substance is plainly and euidently set before our eyes. For howsoeuer our saluation consists yet in hope, yet the doctrine whereupon it is grounded brings vs directly to heauen. Neither doth *Christ* reach vs his hand to leade vs about by many circuits and shadowes, but with the same doth lift vs vp thither by turning our senses from this world. Now in that
the

the Apostle separates the shadow from the truth and substance, it is because hee had to deale with the Iewes, who rested too much vpon externall things. Lastly, he concludes *that there remains a rest to the people of God*: that is to say, a Verse 9. spirituall rest, wherunto God doth daily call vs.

For he which is entred into his rest.] This is the definition Verse 10. of this perpetuall Sabbath, in which the chiefe felicitie and blessednes of men consists, wherein there is some similitude betweene God and them, by which they are ioyned vnto him. For whatsoeuer the Philosophers haue disputed touching the soueraigne good, all was but lies and meere follies: because they held man still in himselfe, whereas wee must goe out of our selues to attaine true felicitie. The soueraigne good of man then is nothing els but to be knit vnto God. Then we shall come vnto it, when wee are conformed according to the rule and paterne which he sets before vs in his person. Now the Apostle shewes that this conformitie consists in this, that wee rest from our owne workes: whereupon it followes, that a man is made blessed when he renounceth himselfe. What is it then to rest from our owne workes, but the mortification of the flesh: that is to wit, when a man renounceth himselfe to liue to God? For when we speake of the rule of living well and holily, we must alwaies begin at this, that man being dead in himselfe, do suffer God to liue in him: that he cease from his owne workes, to giue God place to worke in him. For it must needs be confessed that the life is then well ordered, when it is subiect to God. Now such is the corruption of our nature, that this will neuer be brought to passe, vntill we cease from our owne workes. There is (I say) such a repugnancie betweene the gouernment of God and our affections, that hee cannot worke in vs, vnlesse wee rest. But for as much as the accomplishment of this rest is neuer in this life, wee must daily strue to come vnto it. The faithfull then doe enter into it, but it is vpon condition that they profit daily in pressing to the marke.

We must goe out of our selues to attaine true felicitie. The soueraigne good of man.

Moreover, I doubt not but the Apostle of set purpose alludes

ludes to the Sabbath day, to the ende he might withdrawe the Jewes from the externall obseruation of it. For the abolishing thereof cannot be vnderstood, vnlesse we know the spirituall ende for which it was instituted. And therefore the Apostle vnder this one, aimes at two things. For in praising the excellencie of Gods grace, he drawes vs to receiue it by faith: and yet in the meane while, he shewes by the way the true manner of obseruing the Sabbath: to the ende the Jewes should no longer abuse themselves by staying in the outward ceremonie. True it is, he speakes not directly of the abolishing thereof, because it was not his purpose; but in shewing that this ceremonie had another end; he thus draws them by litle and litle from that superstitious opinion which they had of it. For whosoever vnderstands that the commandement had an other ende besides the externall rest, or an earthly obseruation; such a one looking vnto Christ, knowes by and by that the vse of the ceremony is abolished by his comming. For as soone as the bodie appeares, the shadows vanish away. Wherefore a man ought alwaies in the first place, carefully to shew that Christ is the end of the law.

11 *Let vs studie therefore to enter into that rest, least any man fall after the same ensample of disobedience.*

12 *For the word of God is lively, and mightie in operation, and sharper than any two edged sword, and entreth through, euen vnto the diuiding asunder of the soule and the spirit, and of the ioynts, and the marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts, & the intents of the heart.*

13 *Neither is there any creature, which is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and open vnto his eyes, with whom we haue to doe.*

Verse 11.

HAuing shewed vs the marke whereat we ought to aime, he now admonisheth vs to put our selues into the way; which we shall doe, when we accustome our selues to renounce our own nature. Now because he compares the entrance

entrance into this rest, to a strait course: he sets *falling*, as opposite thereunto: and so he continues the similitude in both the members. Although he by and by makes an allusion to the historie, which *Moses* recites of those that fell in the desert, because they had rebelled against God, Numb. 26. 65. And therefore he saith, *after the same manner of disobedience*: signifying that the punishment of infidelitie and rebellion is represented before vs, as it were in a painted table: also that we should not doubt but the like will befall vs, if we be found guiltie of the same infidelitie. *To fall*, then is taken to perish: or to speake more cleerely, it is taken for the punishment, and not for the sinne. But this metaphor is to be referred both to the former word of entring, as also to the pitiful fall of the Fathers, by whose example he meant to terrifie 1. Cor. 10. 3. the Iewes.

For the word of God is lively: Whatsoever he intreateth of Ver. 12. in this place touching the efficacie of the word, tends to shew that they shall not goe unpunished if they despise it: as if he should say, when the Lord sends vs his word, he speakes vnto vs in good earnest, to the end he may mooue all our inward senses: and therefore what power is there in the soule, which ought not to be touched to the quick? Now before we passe any further, we must see whether the Apostle speakes of the word in generall, or whether he applies this to the faithfull in particular. For it is certaine (and we may see it cleerely) that the word is not effectually indifferently and equally in all. For the vertue thereof manifests it selfe in the elect, that being humbled in the true acknowledgment of themselves, they should haue their recourse to the grace of Christ: which cannot be done vnlesse it pierce into the very depth of the heart. For hypocrisie, which hath many darke corners, and wonderfull conueiances in the heart of man, must be cast out: neither is it enough that we feele some light prickings; but we must be pierced and gaged to the bottome, that so beeing ouerwhelmed with the feeling of eternall death, we may learne to die to our selues. In a word, wee shall neuer be wholly renued in the spirit of
our

*The hearts of
the reprobates
compared to
the Anuill.*

our mind (which S. Paul notwithstanding commands, Eph. 4.23.) till our old man be slaine by the stroke of this spirituall sword. And therefore in another place the same Apostle saith, that the faithfull are sacrificed to God by the Gospel, Phil. 2.17. why? because they could not be brought vnder the obedience of God, vnlesse their owne will were brought to nothing: neither could they otherwise receiue the light of Gods diuine wisdom, vnlesse the light of the flesh by wisdom were put out. As for the reprobates, no such thing can be perceiued in them, for either they proudly contemne God speaking vnto them, yea they spare not to deride him; or else they murmur against his doctrine, & obstinately kicke and spurne against it. So that euen as the word of God is an hammer, so haue they also an heart as the anuill, driuing the blowes backe againe, be they neuer so mightie. And therefore it is vnpossible the word of God should pierce so farre in them, as to come to the *diuision of the soule and of the spirit*. For this cause it seemes that this title ought only to be restrained to the faithfull; seeing none but they doe examine themselues thus to the quicke. Notwithstanding the coherēce of the text of the Apostle shews, that it is a generall sentence, which extends it selfe euen to the reprobates. For although they be not softened by it, but doe set hearts of iron and Steele against God and his word, yet must they necessarily be shut vp vnder their owne condemnation. It is true they laugh; but it is the laughter of an hostler, as they say; for they feele themselues wrung as it were within: many shiftings and turnings they make that they might not come neere the iudgement seat of God: but thither are they drawne will they nill they, euen by this word, against which they so proudly exalt themselues. So then we may compare them to madde dogges, who although they bite and scratch the chaine, yet they gaine nothing, because they still remaine fast tied therewith. Now howsoeuer this effect of the word doth not shewe it selfe at the first day, yet by the euent at the last you shall know, that the word is not preached to any man in vaine. Verily it is a

generall sentence which Christ pronounceth when he saith, The Spirit shall come and reprove the world of sin, Ioh. 16.8. But how doth the Spirit exercise this reproofe? Verily by the Gospell preached. Lastly, although the word of God hath not alwaies this power in men, yet it hath this power inclosed in it selfe.

Now the Apostle disputes here of the nature and proper office of it, onely to the end we might know that as soone as it hath sounded in our eares, our consciences are forthwith arraigned before Gods iudgement seate, and found guiltie. As if hee should say, If any man bee of that minde that hee thinkes it is but a beating of the aire in vaine when the word of God is preached, he greatly erreth and deceiues himselfe. For the word is *liuely*, and full of secret efficacie, which leaues no part of a man vntouched. This is the summe then of these words, to wit, that as soon as the Lord hath opened his sacred mouth, all our senses ought forthwith to be open and to receiue his word. Why? because he will not speake in vaine, as if his words should either vanish, or fall to the ground, or as if no account were to bee made of them: but he speakes with efficacie to the consciences of men, that he might subiect them vnto himselfe. The cause therefore why he giues such vertue to his word is, that it might search all the parts of the soule; examine the thoughts, and discern betweene the affections: in a word, that it might shew it selfe to be our Iudge.

But here a new question may arise, to wit, whether this is to be vnderstood of the Law or of the Gospell. They which thinke the Apostle speakes of the Law, bring these testimonies of *S. Paul*, that it is the ministerie of death, 2. Cor. 3. 6. 7. that it is a killing letter, that it brings nothing but wrath, and such like. But the Apostle in this place also notes diuers other effects. For as wee haue said, there is a liuely killing of the soule, which is done by the Gospell. Let vs know then that the Apostle speakes of the whole doctrine of God, when he saith it is liuely, and mightie in operation. To the same purpose *S. Paul* protests that his preaching was the
Question.
Answer.
sweete

2. Cor. 2. 16.

sweete saour of life vnto life to the faithfull, and of death vnto death in the vnfaithfull: so as God neuer speakes in vaine, but either he thereby brings his owne to saluation; or els thereby casts the wicked headlong into perdition. And this is the power of binding and losing which the Lord committed to his Apostles, Matth. 18. 18. This is the spirituall power whereof *Paul* glorieth in the 2. Cor. 10. 4. And indeede it doth neuer promise vs saluation in Christ; but on the contrarie it openly denounceth vengeance to the vnfaithfull, who in reiecting of Christ, doe plunge themselues ouer head and eares in death.

Moreouer, wee must note that the Apostle speakes of the word of God as it is brought vs by the ministerie of men. For these are but railings and pernicious discourses of them who say, it is true that the inspired word hath indeed his efficacy, but the word which proceedes from the mouthes of men, is dead and without effect. I confesse the efficacy proceedes not from the tongues of men, neither consists it in the bare sound, but the efficacy is wholly to be giuen to the Spirit of God: and yet notwithstanding al this lets not that the holy Ghost should not manifest his power by the word preached. For in regard that God speakes not personally himselfe, but by men; the Apostle doth so much the more insist vpon this, that the word should not be receiued hand ouer head, or in contempt because men are the ministers of it. Accordingly, when *S. Paul* calles the Gospell the power of God, Rom. 1. 16. he doth expressly adorne it with this title of preaching; the which hee saw to bee a matter of reproch vnto some, and of contempt vnto others. And where he teacheth in another place, that saluation is made ours by the doctrine of faith, hee expressly giues it the title of that which is preached, Rom. 10. 8. Wee see how God alwaies doth precisely commend the doctrine which is administred vnto vs by men, to the end hee might hold vs in the reuerence and obedience of it. Now in that the word is called *liuely*, it must be supplied as hauing relation vnto vs: which is the better vnderstood by the second epithite: for in say-
ing

*Preaching
must not be
contemned.*

ing this word is *mightie*, he shewes wherein the life of it consists. For the Apostles meaning is to shew what the vse of the word is in regard of vs. Now as touching the similitude of a *sword*, the Scripture vseth it also in other places: but the Apostle not content with the simple comparison, saith, that the word of God is *sharper than any sword*, yea than any *two edged sword*: because in that time they commonlie wore swords which had but one edge.

And diuideth betweene the soule and the spirit.] This word *soule* is often taken for the spirit: but when the soule and spirit are ioyned together, then the soule comprehends ynder it all the affections: and the spirit comprehends the power or facultie of the vnderstanding. And thus *S. Paul* desiring of God that he would conserue the soules, *1. Thess. 5. 23.* the spirits and bodies of the Thessalonians pure and blamelesse vnto the comming of Christ, desires nothing els, but that they may continue pure and chaste in minde, in will, and in all their externall actions. Likewise when *Isaiah* saith, With my soule haue I desired thee in the night, and with my spirit haue I sought thee in the morning: his meaning is that hee was so attent in seeking God, that hee applied his whole minde and heart thereunto, *Isai. 26. 9.* I know others doe expound it otherwise; but I hope all that are of sound iudgement will easily agree with me. Let vs now returne to the present text. The word of God reacheth euen to the diuiding *betweene the soule and the spirit*: that is to say, it examines the whole life of man. For it pearceth euen to the thoughts of the minde, and soundeth the will, with all the desires of the same. To the same end tends that which is added of the *ioyns, and marrow*: for his meaning is, that there is nothing so hard or massie in man, nor nothing so secret and hidden, but the efficacie of this word will reach into it.

And that is it which *S. Paul* meanes when he saith, that prophecie serueth to reprooue and iudge men, euen to the reuealing of the secrets of their hearts, *1. Cor. 14. 24.* Truly howsoeuer it be the office of Christ to discover & bring to light the secret thoughts of the heart, yet for the most part

No darknes
like infidelitie;
nor any blind-
nes to hypocri-
sie: but the
word preached
discovers both.

he doth this by his Gospell. The word then performeth the office of a Iudge: because it plucks the spirit of man as out of a labyrinth in which before it lay inwrapped, and kept it selfe close, and brings it forth into the Sunne light, to the end knowledge and iudgement may passe vpon it. For no darknes is so thicke as infidelitie is: and hypocrisie blindeth after an horrible fashion. The word of God scattereth this darknes, & casteth off this hypocrisie quite and cleane. From thence proceedes that discerning and iudgement whereof the Apostle speaketh; for the vices which before were hidden vnder a vaine pretence and appearance of verue, are now perceiued and knowne, the deceit being taken away. Now although the reprobates remaine for a time hidden in their lurking holes, yet notwithstanding in the end they feelee that the light of the word shineth euen thither, so as they cannot escape the iudgement of God. And from thence ariseth their murmurings and rage. For if they were not smitten with the word, they would not manifest their furie as they doe: they would rather scorne it, or wind themselves out of the power of it: they would also be content to dissemble the matter: but God will not suffer them to scape so. Therefore as soone as they doe begin to murmur at the word, or to be inflamed against it, they thereby confesse that they feelee the force of it within them in despite of their teeth, kick they neuer so much against it.

Ver. 13.

Neither is there any creature hid from him, &c.] This word *And*, is as much to say in this place (in my iudgement) as if he had said, For. And so to confirme this sentence, *That nothing is hidden in man*, which shall not bee iudged by the word of God; he takes an argument from the nature of God, *No creature*, saith he, can be hidden before God: nothing then is so deep in the soule, which shal not be drawne into the light by his word, which resembles him that is the author of it. For as it is the office of God to search the harts, so doth he also exercise this knowledge and iudgement by his word. The expositors not taking heede to this: to wit, that the word of God is as a plummet, by the which hee diues

diues into the bottome of mens hearts, and searcheth and
 feeleth whatsoeuer is hidden therein, haue offered violence
 to this whole text; and yet were not able to winde them-
 selues out. But all the difficultie is taken away if you make
 the argument stand thus, That we are therefore to obey the
 word of God purely and with a true affection of heart, be-
 cause God who knowes the hearts, hath assigned this office
 to his word to pierce even into the very deepest thoughts of
 the same. They haue also deceiued themselves in the tran-
 slation of the Greeke word, which is somewhat ambiguous.
 For they haue translated, Of whom we speak; where it ought
 rather to be turned, *with whom we haue to doe*. The meaning
 whereof is, that it is God who offereth himselfe vnto vs, or
 with whom we haue to doe, and therefore wee are to take
 heede we dallie not with him as with a mortall man; but to
 tremble as often as his word is propounded vnto vs, be-
 cause nothing is so secret, which is not naked and manifest
 before his eyes.

14 Seeing then that wee haue a great high Priest, which is Verse 14.
 entred into heauen, euen Iesus the Sonne of God, let vs hold fast
 our "profession.

15 For wee haue not an high Priest, which cannot * be tou- * or, confession.
 ched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all things not haue com-
 tempted in like sort yet without sinne. passion of our
 infirmities.

16 Let vs therefore go boldly vnto the throne of grace, that
 we may receiue mercie, and finde grace to helpe in time of need.

Seeing then that we haue a great high Priest.] Higherunto he Verse 14.
 Shath spoken of the Apostleship of Christ: now he comes
 to entreate of his second office. For wee haue said, when
 Christ was sent: he receiued two offices, that is, of Doctor,
 and Priest. The Apostle then hauing exhorted the Iewes to
 receiue the doctrine of Christ with all obedience, doth now
 shew vnto them what profit his Priesthood bringeth. And
 this is the second member of his disputation in this Epistle.
 Now hee doth very fitly ioyne the Priesthood with the A-
 postleship

Chap. 2. 17. &
chap. 3. 1.

Those that pro-
fesse them-
selues schollers
in the schoole
of Christ, must
learne what
profit redounds
vnto them by
his priesthood:
as also the vse
and end of it.

possession, in that he saith, the end of them both is to bring vs to God. He saith, *Then*; because he had touched this article also before, to wit, that Christ is our high Priest: but because the efficacy of the Priesthood is communicated vnto vs by doctrine onely, it was needfull to prepare mens minds thereby to receiue Christ. Now it remaines that those who acknowledge him for their Schoolemaster, and yeild themselves teachable disciples vnder him, doe also learne from his mouth, or in his schoole, what profit his Priesthood bringeth, and what the vse and end of it is. He saith in the first place, seeing we haue such an high Priest, euen Iesus the Sonne of God, *Let vs hold fast our profession*. Confession is here taken for faith, as before chap. 3. Nowe because the Priesthood serued to confirme the doctrine, the Apostle gathers from hence that we haue none occasion to doubt or wauer in the faith of the Gospel, seeing the Sonne of God hath ratified and confirmed it. For whosoever holds not this doctrine for sure and stedfast, he dishonors the Sonne of God, and dispoyles him of the dignitie of his Priesthood. Such an excellent pledge I say, ought to giue vs so much the more assurance; that without feare, we may rest our selues vpon the Gospel.

Ver. 14.

For we haue not an high Priest, &c.] There is such a maiestie in this name of the Sonne of God, which he touched in the former verse, that it constraines vs to feare, and obedience: but if we behold nothing els in Christ, our consciences would neuer be in quiet. For who is he that would not feare the face of the Sonne of God; especially if we consider what we are when our sinnes doe present themselves before vs? Moreouer the Iewes might haue had another hindrance; because they were accustomed to the Leviticall Priesthood. There they saw a mortall man, chosen from among his brethren, which entred into the sancturie, that by his praier he might reconcile them vnto god. For it is a great matter when the Mediator which can appease god towards vs, is taken from among vs. This allurements might retaine the mindes of the Iewes in suspence; and hold them alwaies tied

tyed to the Leviticall Priesthood, vnlesse the Apostle had remedied the matter, by shewing that the Sonne of God is not onely excellent in glorie, but also vseth a sweet and amiable goodnesse towards vs. He staies himselfe then in this article, whē he saith that he *felt our infirmities*, that he might haue compassion on vs.

As touching this word *compassion*, I will not stand disputing too subtrilly about it. For the question which some make is no lesse friuolous than curious, to wit, whether Christ is now mooued with our miseries or not? Truly the Apostle had no intent to busie our heads with such idle speculations: but onely shewes that we neede not seeke farre for a Mediator, because Christ reacheth forth his hand vnto vs before we enquire after him. Secondly, that we need not be terrified in regard of his Maiestie, for he is our brother. Thirdly, that we haue no occasion to feare that he should not be touched with any compassion to doe vs good as if himselfe had neuer tasted of miseries; for he hath borne our infirmities, to the ende he might be the better inclined to succour vs.

The whole speech then of the Apostle ought to be referred to the sense of faith, because he doth not so much dispute what Christ is in himselfe, but rather what he is in regard of vs. By this word of *likenesse*, he meanes the agreemēt of the nature; thereby signifying that Christ by putting on our nature, hath also taken our affections, not onely to the end he might declare himselfe to be true man, but also that he might learne by experience to giue succour to the afflicted. Not that the sonne of God had neede of such rudiments or instructions, but because we could not otherwise comprehend in our mindes the care which he hath of our saluation. As often then as we are burthened and faint vnder the infirmities of our flesh, let vs remember that the Son of God hath both felt, and had experience of the like; to the end he might sustaine vs by his power, that we should not be ouerwhelmed vnder them. But here it may be asked, what he means by *infirmities*: for this word is taken in di-

uers significations. Some thinke he meanes heate, cold, hunger, thirst, and such other bodily infirmities: as also contempt, pouertie, and the like, as we may see in many places of *Paul*, but specially in the 2. Cor. 12. 10. But their opinion is the best, who with pouerties and outward miseries doe also comprehend afflictions of minde, as feare, sorrowe, terrours of death, and such like.

And indeed this restraint, *without sinne*, should otherwise be in vaine. For by reason of the peruersitie of our nature, our affections are alwaies vitious, but they were exempt from all vice in Christ, because in him there was a soueraign vprightnesse, and a puritie most perfect. It is certaine that sicknesses, and pouerties, together with the things which are without vs, are not imputed as finnes. Wherefore when he speaketh of the infirmities which are neere vnto sinne, wee need not doubt but he meant the affections of the Spirit, to which mans nature is subiect because of his infirmities: for herein the condition of Angels is better than ours, that they are not subiect to feare, or sorrow; as also that they are not combred with cares, or with the feare of death. Christ hath willingly taken vpon him these infirmities, and it was also his pleasure to fight against them, not onely to conquer them for vs; but that we should also be assuredly perswaded that he is neere vnto vs, as often as we feele any by experience of them. For this cause he was not onely made man essentially, but also tooke vpon himselfe the qualities of mans nature. There is alwaies a restraint added, *without sinne*: because we are euermore to obserue this difference betweene the affections of Christ, and ours: That Christs were alwaies well ordered according to the true rule of iustice: but ours, which proceede from a troubled fountaine, doe alwaies fauour of their originall nature, because they are out of frame and disordered.

Verse 16.

Let vs therefore goe boldly, &c. He concludes that al they haue accessse vnto God, which come to him in the name of the Mediator, and doe rest vpon him: yea he exhorts them that they should not feare to present themselves before the face

face of God. And this is the principall fruit of the spirituall doctrine, euen to haue full confidence to call vpon God: as one the contrarie, all religion falls to the ground, where this assurance is taken away from mens consciences. From whence we may easily gather that the light of the Gospel was quenched in the Papacie, where the poore miserable people are commanded to doubt whether God will be gracious and fauorable, or whether he will be angrie with them. They command men indeed to seeke God; but they shewe them not the way by which they may come vnto him: nay rather they euen shutte vp the gate, which onely giues them entrance. I grant they confesse that Christ is a Mediatour in the Generall; but when it comes to the point, they abolish the vertue of his Priesthood, and dispoyle him of his honor. For this is a sure point, that where Christ is knowne indeede to be the true Mediatour, there forthwith doth all doubtings vanish, that may any way cause vs to suspect whether we may haue access vnto God or no. Otherwise the Apostles consequence in this place, *We haue such an high Priest which is readie to helpe vs*, were to no purpose.

All religion falls to the ground: where assurance of saluation is taken from mens consciences.

We ought therefore to goe boldly *to the throne of grace*, with assurance and confidence. For if we were througly perswaded that Christ doth willingly reach vs his hand, who is it that would not conceiue full boldnesse to present himselfe before this throne? That which I haue said then is true, to wit, that men doe take the vertue of Christ his Priesthood away from him, as long as they stand in doubt, and vex themselves in seeking Mediators here and there, as if Christ alone were not sufficient: vpon whose intercession whosoeuer rests himselfe indeed, as the Apostle here commandeth, he may assure himselfe that his praiers are heard. The foundation of this assurance is, that the throne of God doth not present such a maiestie as should astonish vs; but it is adorned with a new title, that is to say, *of grace*: which alwaies ought to be fresh in our memories, when we flie the presence of God. For it cannot be but the glorie of God should swallowe vs. vp by and by with despaire, if that alone

come into our mindes : and so, his throne shall be fearefull vnto vs indeede. The Apostle therefore to remedie this distrust, and to deliuer our mindes from feare and trembling, doth cloath it with grace, and giues a name vnto it that might draw vs by the sweetnes thereof. As if he should say, since God doth hang out of his throne an ensigne of grace, & of his fatherly loue towards vs, we haue no cause to feare that his maiestie should beat vs backe, or hinder vs to goe vnto him. The summe is, that we call vpon God boldly with full confidence, since we knowe that he is become fauourable to vs; and that we doe this by the meanes of Christ: as it is said, Eph. 3. 12. By him we haue boldnesse and confidence by faith in him. For when Christ receiueth vs vnder his gard and protection, he couereth the admirable maiestie of God with fauour (which without him would be fearefull) to the end that nothing might appeare there but grace and fatherly kindnes.

*We ought not
to feare the
throne of God,
for it is hang-
ed all ouer
with grace.*

That we may receiue mercie.] This is not added without great cause, but expressely to confirme and imbolden those that haue neede of mercie: Least any beeing thrown down too farre with the feeling of their miserie; the way should be shut by distrust against them. This manner of speech *to finde grace*, containes in it in the first place a most sweet doctrine: to wit, that all those who resting themselves vpon the intercession of Christ, shall call vpon God, shall be well assured to obtaine mercie. In the meane while, the Apostle doth priuily threaten all them which hold not this way, and signifies that God will not heare them, because they haue despised the onely meanes whereby to appease him. He addeth, *to helpe in time of neede*, that is to say, to obtaine whatsoever is needfull for our saluation. Now this time of need, hath respect to the time of Gods calling vs, according as S. Paul applies the place of Isaiah, 49. 8. to the publishing of the Gospel, Behold now the acceptable time. 2. Cor. 6. 2. for the Apostle hath respect to that day wherein god speaks to vs. So that if to day we heare God speake vnto vs, and we put off till to morrow; the night will come, with the darkenes

nes thereof, in which we shall not be able to doe that which now wee may : neither will it boote vs any thing at all to knock at the gate when it shall be shut.

CHAP. V.

1 For euery high Priest is taken from among men, and is ordained for men, in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sinnes,

2 Which is able sufficiently to haue compassion on them that are ignorant, and that are out of the way, because that he also is compassed with infirmitie.

3 And for the sames sake he is bound to offer for sinnes, as well for his owne part as for the people.

4 And no man taketh this honour vnto himselfe, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.

5 So likewise Christ tooke not to himselfe this honour to bee made the high Priest, but he that said vnto him, Thou art my Sonne, this day begat I thee, gaue it him :

Psal. 2. 7.

6 As he also in another place speaketh, Thou art a Priest for euer, after the order of Melchisedec.

Psal. 110. 4.

NOW euery high Priest, &c.] He compares Christ with the Leuiticall Priests : and shewes what hee hath in common with them, and wherein they differ. Now the whole disputation tends to haue Christ his office well vnderstood ; as also to shew that whatsoever was ordained vnder the Law, had respect vnto him. And from hence the Apostle makes way at the last to shew how the old Priesthood is abolished. First he saith, the Priests are taken from among men. Secondly, that they offer not for themselves in particular only, but for all the people. Thirdly, that they must not come empty handed to appease God, but furnished with sacrifices. Fourthly, that they were not to be exempt from our infirmities, to the end they might the more freely and willingly helpe those which were burthened.

Verse. 1.

1

2

3

4

5 thened. Lastly, that they were not foolishlie to intrude themselves into this office of the high Priest, but that the true and lawfull honour thereof did not appertaine vnto them, vntill they were chosen and approued of God.

Now let vs come to handle euery point briefly. But before wee begin; the ignorance of those is to be reprocued who draw the vse hereof to our times, as if there were the same neede of Priests to offer sacrifices now. This doltish opinion needes no long refutation to ouerthrow it. For it is most cleere and euident, that in this place the truth which is in Christ, is conferred with the figures: which, as they were first in time, so now also haue they taken an end. Which shall easily be made manifest by the laying out of the text. Those therefore who will hereby establish the sacrifice of the Masse are more than ridiculous. But I returne to the true sense and meaning of the Apostle. He saith that the Priests
1 were *taken from among men*: From hence it followes that Christ must needes be true man. For in as much as wee are separate a farre off from God, we doe in some sort appeare before his face in the person of the Priest: which could not be done if he were not a man as wee are, and taken from amongst vs. Wherfore although the Sonne of God haue one nature in common with vs, it is so farre off from diminishing ought from his dignitie, that it is rather thereby augmented. He therefore is fit to appease God, and make him amiable vnto vs, because he is man. Saint *Paul* therefore to proue that he is our Mediatour, doth expressly call him man. For had he been taken from among the Angels, or from any other, wee could not haue been ioyned vnto God by him, because hee could not come vnto vs.

2 *And is ordained for men.*] This is the second member, that the Priest doth not administer particularly for himselfe, but is ordained for the publike good of the people. And this is a point well worthie the noting, to the end wee may knowe that the saluation of vs all consists in the Priesthood of Christ. These words, *in things appertaining vnto God*, expresse of what kinde the benefit is. Notwithstanding

standing we may reade them two waies, because the Greeke word hath a passiue signification as well as an actiue: so as wee may translate it to ordaine, or to be ordained. They which take it in the passiue signification, turne it thus, is ordained. I approue the other interpretation as the better. The Priest appointeth or prouideth the things pertaining vnto God. For the construction runneth better, and the sentence is more full. Notwithstanding in what sort soeuer you take it, the Apostles drift is to shew, that wee haue nothing to doe with God, if there be not a Priest betweene him and vs. For seeing wee are prophane, what communion can wee haue with holy things? In a word, wee are estranged from God and his seruice, till the Priest sets himselfe betweene God and vs, presenting himselfe for vs in our place.

To the end he may offer] The third thing which he placeth in the Priest, is the offering of gifts. But hee here puts two words, *gifts and sacrifices*. The first, as I think, comprehends vnder it diuers kindes of sacrifices: and so it containes the generall. The second, in mine opinion, signifies the sacrifices of purgation. Notwithstanding he would briefly note, that the Priest could be no peace maker betweene God and men, vnlesse he had some beast to sacrifice: why? because satisfaction for sinnes could not be made, nor Gods wrath appeased without sacrifice. Wherefore as often as the question is of reconciliation betweene God and men, this gage or pledge must alwaies goe before. Thus wee see that the Angels are not sufficient to obtaine the fauour of God for vs, because they are not furnished with sacrifice: and so we must say of the Prophets and Apostles. There is none then but Christ onely, who hauing done away our sinnes by his sacrifice, can make God mercifull and fauourable to our requests.

Which is able sufficiently, &c.] This fourth point doth approach somewhat neere to the first, yet it must bee distinguished. For in the first member the Apostle taught that mankinde is ioyned with God in the person of a man, because

all

all men are of one nature and flesh. But now hee toucheth another thing, to wit, that the Priest ought to support sinners with compassion; because he is partaker of their infirmities. The Greeke word which the Apostle here useth, hath been diuersly expounded as well by Latins as Greekes. For mine owne part I thinke it is simply taken to applie himself to compassion. True it is that all which is said of the Leuiticall Priests, agrees not vnto Christ. For we know that Christ was exempt from all contagion of sinne: wherefore he differs from others in this regard that he had no neede to offer sacrifices for himselfe: but it sufficeth that he also bare our infirmities, being notwithstanding pure and voide of sinne. Thus as touching the Priests vnder the law then, the Apostle saith that they were subiect to humane infirmities: and therefore were faine to make reconciliation for their owne finnes by sacrifices, that they might not only meekly beare with the faults of others, but also might haue compassion vpon them. Now this part ought so to be applied to Christ, that in the meane while wee must carefully adde thereunto that exception whereof mention was made erewhile: to wit, that hee bare and tasted of our infirmities; but without sinne. For although he were alwaies free from sinne, yet notwithstanding the onely feeling of those infirmities, whereof he hath spoken, were of sufficient force in him, to encline his heart to succour vs, and to make him gentle and readie to pardon vs; as also carefull of our miseries. The summe is, that Christ is not onely our brother in regard of the vnion of our flesh and nature, but also by partaking with vs of our infirmities he is allured, nay fashioned and framed to beare with vs, and to bee very lowly and gracious vnto vs. The Greeke word which wee translate, *who can*, imports more than if wee should say in our common speech, is able, or, is mightie: for it is taken for one that is fit, or capable. These words, *the ignorant, and those that are out of the way*, are taken for sinners after the manner of the Hebrues. And of this we are to speake more hereafter.

Verf. 4.

And no man taketh this honour vnto him, &c.] In this member

ber we haue to note, first the similitude, and then the diuersitie of it. The calling of God makes the office lawfull, for none can exercise the same in good sort as he ought, if he be not created of God. This is common to Christ and to *Aaron*, that both were called of God: but in this they differ, that in as much as Christ succeeded *Aaron* for a newe and diuers respect, and was ordained to be a perpetuall high Priest, it appears that the Priesthood of *Aaron* was but temporarie, and to be abolished. Now we see the Apostles drift. The right of the office of Priesthood was to be reserved to Christ: he doth it in shewing that God is the author of it. But this is not yet sufficient, vnlesse it appears that the auncient Priesthood ceased, to giue place to this. He proues it, because we must haue an eie to the Condition whereunto *Aaron* was ordained a Priest (for it lieth not in vs to stretch it further then Gods ordinance will beare) and he will by and by shew how long Gods wil was, this first order should last. Christ then is a lawfull Priest, because he was ordained by Gods authoritie. What shall we say of *Aaron*, and of those that succeeded him? Truely they had power and authoritie so farre forth as it was giuen them of God, and not as the same was attributed vnto them by the opinion of men.

Now although this be spoken in regard of the circumstance of speech which is here handled; yet from hence may be gathered a generall doctrine: to wit, that no gouernment is to be brought into the Church at the lust and pleasure of men, but ought rather to tarrie and waite for the commandement of God: also, that a certaine and set rule is to be vsed in election and choice of ministers, that so none intrude himselfe after his own fantasie. We must distinctly note both these points. For the Apostle speakes not here onely of persons, but also of the office. He denies, I say, that office which men forge without commandement, and the expresse ordinance of God, to be holy or lawfull. For as it onely belongs to God to gouerne the Church, so doth he also wholly reserve vnto himselfe both the power of limiting
 Church go-
 uernment must
 not be squared
 according to
 mens appetites,
 but by the com-
 mandement of
 God.
 the

*Christ would
not runne be-
fore he was
sent, but waited
for a calling
from his father*

*Those that
haue a lawfull
outward cal-
ling, are not
rashly to be re-
iected, though
they want the*

the way, and the rule of the administration thereof. From whence I conclude, that the Priesthood of the Popedome is a bastard Priesthood, because it hath beene forged in the shoppe of mans inuention. What one text of scripture is there wherein God commands that wee should now offer sacrifice vnto him for the purgation of sinnes? neither hath he ordained that Priests should be created to this ende. Although the Pope then ordaine his shauelings for to offer sacrifice, the Apostle saith that we are not to hold them for lawfull: vnlesse peraduenture they haue some newe priuledge to exalt themselues aboute Christ: who yet durst not take this honour to himselfe of his own motion, but waited for a calling from his Father.

This also ought to haue place in regard of persons; to the ende no priuate man should take this honour to himselfe, vnlesse publike authoritie goe alwaies before. I speake of the offices which otherwise are ordained of God. It may so fall out sometimes I denie not, but he which shall not be called of God (howsoeuer for that cause he is the lesse to be approoued of) ought notwithstanding to be suffered, if so be his office be holy & approoued of God. For often times many thrust in themselues, and enter into this function by ambition, or other vnlawfull and wicked meanes, who are no way assured of their calling: and yet notwithstanding they must not be reiected by and by; but especially then, when it cannot be done by the publike censure of the Church. Two hundred yeares before the comming of Iesus Christ, there were filthy corruptions, & great abuses which raigned in the manner of gouerning, or rather in the vsurpation of the high Priest: and yet notwithstanding as touching the office it selfe, the power and authoritie of the state remained still, by reason the calling was of God. The persons were indured, because the libertie of the Church was oppressed. Whereby it appeares that the great and chiefest fault is in the kind of the office: that is to wit, when men take vpon them of themselues to inuent a calling in the Church, which God hath no way commanded. So much the lesse then

then are those Priests which the Pope hath made, to be endured; who to prooue themselves such as ought to be held for sacred and holy, doe with full mouth incessantly alleage their great titles: and yet notwithstanding they haue chosen them themselves, without asking either counsell or leaue of God.

Thou art my sonne, this day haue I begotten thee. It may seeme that this sentence is farre fetched. For although it be graunted that Christ was begotten of God the Father, doth that conclude therefore that he was ordained a Priest by him also? But if we consider to what ende Christ was reuealed to the world, we shall easily perceiue that this qualitie doth necessarily appertaine vnto him. But withall, we must also call that againe to minde which we haue said in the first chapter: to wit, that this generation of Christ, whereof the Psalmist speaketh, is a testimonie that the Father hath giuen him to men. Wherefore this word is not put here to signifie a mutuall relation between the Father and the Son, but is rather to be referred vnto men, to whom he was manifested after an high and excellent manner. But what is it, that God hath manifested vnto vs in his Sonne? is it without honour, or without any power at all? nay, hath he not rather manifested him to be such a one as is fitte to be the Mediator betweene God and men? And therefore this generation or begetting, containeth also the Priesthood.

As also in another place he saith, &c. Now the Apostle Verf. 6. doth more cleerely expresse his meaning. It is an excellent place and worthy of our obseruation, and so is the whole Psalm it selfe out of which it is take. For there is scarcely to be found a more manifest prophesie, either of the eternall Priesthood, or kingdome of Christ, than this; And yet notwithstanding the Iewes labour with might and maine to picke quarrels on euery side to darken the glorie of Christ: but they gaine nothing by it. For whereas they drawe that which is there spoken to *David*, as if it were he that should be at the right hand of God: It is too blockish an impudencie. We know it was ytterly vnlawfull for Kings to meddle

with

with the Priesthood. And therefore *Vzziah* for this onely crime, to wit, for vsurping this office which no way belonged vnto him, did so prouoke the wrath of God, that he was stricken with leprosie, 2. Chro. 26. 18. It is certaine therefore, that this is not meant of the person of *Dauid*, nor of any of the kings which succeeded him. If they reply that Princes are sometimes called by the name *Cohenim*, which is here vsed: I confesse it, but withall I denie that this agrees with this present place: for the comparison leaues no ambiguitie: *Melchizedec* was the Priest of God. The Psalme witnesseth that this King, which he hath placed at his right hād, shall be *Cohen*, after the order of *Melchizedec*. Who sees not that this is to be vnderstood of the Priesthood? for it being a very rare example, & scarcely to be found, that a man should be Priest and King together; at the least a thing new and vnheard of among the people of God: therefore he proposeth *Melchizedec* for an exāple of the *Messias*. As if he should say, The Royall dignitie shall not hinder him frō exercising the office of the Priest also; why? because the figure was foreshewed in *Melchizedec*. And truely those amongst the Iewes which are not altogether impudent, doe agree that this is here spoken of the *Messias*: moreouer they doubt not, but these wordes doe tende to the praise and magnifying of the Priesthood.

Whereas the Greekes haue translated *after the order*; in the Hebrew it is word for word As, or, according to the forme, or after the fashio[n] of. Which confirms my former speech, to wit, because it was a thing vsuall among the people, that a man should be king and Priest both together, he therefore sets this auncient example before them, by which the *Messias* was figured: as for the rest, the Apostle wil handle it more particularly in the progresse of the text.

7 Wherin the daies of his flesh did offer vppraiers and supplications, with strong crying and teares vnto him that was able to saue him from death, and was also heard in that which he feared.

8 And though he were the Sonne, yet learned he obedience,
by the things which he suffered.

9 And being consecrate, was made the author of eternal sal-
uation vnto all them that obey him.

10 And is called of God an high Priest after the order of
Melchisedec:

11 Of whom we haue many things to speake, which are hard
to be uttered, because ye are dull of hearing.

WHo in the daies, &c.] Because the outward forme
and beautie of Christ is often disfigured by the
crosse, when men consider not to what end he was humbled
and abased: the Apostle here againe teacheth that which he
had touched before, to wit, that there shined a marueilous
goodnes of his in this, in that hee subiected himselfe to our
infirmities for our benefit and profit. Whence it appeares
that our faith is confirmed, and his honour no way dimini-
shed by this his bearing of our miseries. Now hee assignes
two causes wherefore it behoued that Christ should suffer:
the neereſt cause; and the last. The nigheſt was that hee
might learne obedience: the last, that by this meanes hee
might be consecrated the high Priest of our saluation. Now
no man doubts but *the daies of his flesh*, should be here taken
for the life present. Whence it followes, that by this word
flesh, he meanes not the substance, but the qualitie: as 1. Cor.
15.50. Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdome of
God. These fantasticall spirits then doe altogether dote,
who haue dreamed that Christ is now dispoyled of his flesh,
because it is here said, When he was in the flesh. For there is
great difference betweene being a true man (although in
the blessed estate of immortalitie) and to be subiect to the
miseries and infirmities of man, which he endured whileſt
hee liued in this world: but now hath put them off, being
entred into heauen.

Let vs come to the point of this text then. Christ which
was the Sonne, sought for remedie to his Father, who was
heard; and yet notwithstanding endured death: that by
this fered death.

Christ's prayer
was heard,
and yet he suf-
fered death.

this meanes he might learne obedience. There is no word here which hath not his weight. For, *by the daies of his flesh*, he meanes that the time of our miseries is determined and limited; which must needs bring great solace vnto vs. It were a troublesome estate, yea and vnpossible to be borne, if some hope were not set before vs that wee should come from vnder the burthen thereof in time. The three things that follow do also bring great consolation. Christ was the Sonne, and therefore his dignitie did exempt him from the common condition of others: notwithstanding he humbled himselfe thereunto for the loue he bare vs. What is hee now that dare refuse this state and condition? there is another reason: to wit, that if we be pressed with aduersities, yet wee are not therefore out of the number of Gods children: because wee see him that was the onely naturall Sonne of God to goe before vs. For we are the children of God, only by the benefit of adoption: yet hee who of right may attribute this honour to himselfe, receiueth vs into his societie.

*Afflictions doe
not exempt vs
out of the num-
ber of Gods
children.*

2 *Did offer vp prayers and supplications, &c.]* The second is this, that Christ sought remedie at his hands who was able to saue him, that hee might be deliuered from his troubles. And this he saith to the end none should thinke that Christ had an heart of brasse without feeling. For we must alwaies consider to what end euery thing is spoken. If Christ had not bin touched with any sorrow, what consolation would haue come vnto vs by his passions? But when we heare that he felt not bodily paines alone, but also endured sharp torments in his spirit, herein is the similitude shewed between him and vs. For when Christ (saith he) endured death and other miseries, it was not to the end he should set them light, or not be touched with any feeling of them: for he prayed with cries, and teares, by which hee gaue testimonie of the great anguish that was in his heart. The Apostle then by these teares, and strong cries would expresse a vehement dolour: it being an ordinarie manner of speech to note out that which was done, by the signes. Neither do I doubt but that

that he speakes of that prayer which the Euangelists recite: to wit, Father, if it bee possible, let this cup passe from me, Matth. 26. 39. Also another time, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? For the Euangelists recite, that in this second prayer there was a great crie: In the first, wee must not imagine that his eyes were drie, whilest drops of blood trickled from his bodie, by reason of the great sorrow hee was in. For it is most certaine he was then shut vp vnder extreme anguishes. We need not doubt then whether he were pressed with true sorrowes or no, seeing he did thus earnestly pray vnto his Father for succour. But what vse hath this? Truly that as often as we are pressed vnder temptations, we learne to fasten all our senses vpon the Sonne of God, who felt the like. Seeing hee goeth before vs then, wee have no cause to be out of heart. And withall wee are admonished not to sue vnto any for deliuerance out of our miseries, but to God alone. For what better rule of prayer can wee haue than the example of Christ? Now he directed his prayer to none but to his Father: O my Father (saith he) if it be possible, &c. Matth. 26. 39. And the Apostle sheweth vs that we are to doe the like, when he saith that Christ *offered up prayers to him that was able to saue him from death*. For hereby he signifieth that Christ prayed rightly: because he had his recourse to him that was truly bountifull, who is God onely. His crie and teares doe also admonish vs to bee seruent and the more attent when we make our prayers. For wee ought not to goe to prayer retchlesly, but with seruencie of spirit.

What we are to doe in temptations of spirit.

Prayer ought to be seruent.

And was heard in that which he feared.] Some haue translated, For his reuerence: but I doe not at any hand approue of it. For first the Adiectiue, *his*, is not added in the Greeke: moreouer the word which followeth signifies, *of*, or some word like vnto it. Seeing then that the Greeke Noun which is put here signifieth oftentimes rather feare, or care: I doubt not but the Apostle meant to shew that Christ was heard in that which he feared: that is to say, albeit he was ouerwhelmed with sorrowes and aduersities, yet hee fell not vnder

God often
grants our
petitions, when
he seemes to
denie them.

the burthen of them, or that he was not swallowed vp of death. For the Sonne of God humbled himselfe euen to this combate also: not that he was tempted and shaken with distrust, from which all our feares doe proceede; but because as touching the sense of the flesh, he bare the waight of Gods iudgement: the feare wherof could not be ouercome without a great and strong combate. *Chrysostome* expoundeth, For his dignitie, which the Father did somewhat reuerence; which is an absurd thing. Others translate, For his religion or pietie. But mine exposition is much more proper: neither hath it neede of any long confirmation. Now the end why he addes this third member, is that we should not thinke the praiers of Christ were reiected, although he were not forthwith deliuered. For the mercie and helpe of God did neuer faile him. Hence we haue to gather, that we often times doe euen then obtaine our requests of God, when yet we see no semblance of it. For although it becomes vs not to limit him any certaine forme or manner, it beeing also vnmeet he should graunt our requests, according to our prescription, either by our tongue, or thought: yet notwithstanding so farre forth as he sees it will be for our saluation, he shewes by the effects that he hath heard our praiers. And thus it comes to passe, that when we seeme to be reiected; we obtaine much more than if the things we asked were wholly granted vnto vs.

Christ stroue
with the curse
of God, and
with hell it
selfe, and ouer-
came them.

1

2

3

But how was Christ heard in that which he feared, when notwithstanding he endured, or suffered that death, which he feared? I answer, we must haue respect what the ende of his feare was: for why did he refuse death, but because he saw the curse of God in it, and that he was to fight against the condemnation of all sinnes, and against hell it selfe? from hence proceeded his trembling, and his anxietie: euen because the iudgement of God is more than fearefull. Thus then he obtained that he asked, first in that he brought away the victorie ouer the dolours of death: secondly, in that he was sustained by the outstretched arme of his Father: and thirdly, hauing fought for a little space, he triumphed ouer Satan,

Satan, Sinne, and Hell. So it often comes to passe that we aske this or that, but to another end: and God in not granting that which we haue asked, findes some way or other in the meane while to help vs.

And though he were the sonne, &c. Now he toucheth the neereſt end of Chriſt his paſſion: to wit, that he learned obedience by the things which he ſuffered. Not that he was conſtrained thereunto by force, as men are wont to doe in taming of oxen, or reſtie and wild horſes: no, Chriſt had no neede of ſuch exerciſes. For he was willing and readie enough to yeild that obedience vnto God his Father, which he owed vnto him. But it was done in regard of vs, that he might ſhew vs a teſtimonie and experience of his humility euen vnto death it ſelfe. Although in very trueth we may ſay, that Chriſt did perfectly learne by his death, what it is to obey God: ſeeing at that time eſpecially he was brought to denie himſelfe. For then renouncing his owne will, he ſo ſubmitted himſelfe vnto his Father, that freely and willingly he endured that death which he was horribly afraid of. The ſenſe then is, that Chriſt was taught by the practiſe and experiences of his paſſions, how farre we ought to be ſubiect and obedient to God.

Verſe 8.

Therefore it behooues vs alſo after his example to bee taught and framed to obedience by diuers anguiſhes whilſt we liue here, and in the end by death it ſelfe: nay we, much more: for doe we not ſee what a fierce and rebellious ſpirit we haue, if the Lord by ſuch rudiments and inſtructions ſhould not tame vs to beare the yoke? The profit then which comes to vs by the croſſe, ought to aſſwage the bitterneſſe of it in our mindes. For what is more deſireable than to bee brought into obedience vnder God? Now this comes to paſſe for the moſt part, by the croſſe and affliction. For in proſperitie we take our pleaſure, and waxe wanton, as if god had let the raynes looſe in our necke: or to ſpeake as it is indeede, we are oftentimes like horſes broken looſe; our fleſh ouerflowes with inſolencie, and we wholly caſt off the yoke from our neckes. But when we muſt offer violence to our

The profit which the croſſe brings with it, ought to aſſwage the bitterneſſe of it.

*Our obedience
chiefly appears
in the denyall
of our selues.*

flesh, to yeild to that which is pleasing vnto God, then, and neuer till then, doth our obedience appeare. This I say is a singular and euident testimonie of perfect subiection, when as we preferre death it selfe, to which we are called of God, (although it brings feare and horror) before life, which all of vs doe rather naturally desire.

Verſ 9.

*Christ was con-
secrated into
his office of
Priesthood, by
the crosse.*

And being consecrate was made, &c.] This is the last or furthest ende (as they say) wherefore it behooued Christ to suffer: to wit, that by this meanes he might be established, and consecrated into his office of Priesthood. As if the Apostle should haue said, the suffering of the crosse and death, was vnto Christ the solemne manner of his consecration. By which word he signifies, that all his passions tended to our saluation. And thus it appeareth, that they were so farre off from diminishing any thing from his dignitie and excellencie, that rather they were crownes of glorie vpon his head. Now if our saluation be of any pretious account with vs, oh in what honor & estimation the ought we to haue the cause thereof. For hee deales not here onely with the doctrine of example, but mounts vp higher: to wit, that Christ by his obedience hath wiped out all our transgressions. Thus he was made the cause or *author of our saluation*, because he obtained righteousness for vs with God: & by a contrarie remedie blotted out the disobedience of Adam, with his own blood. This word *sanctified*, or consecrate, agrees much better to the rest of the text, than if it were translated, to perfect, or to fulfill. True it is, that the Greeke word signifies both; but because he here speakes of the Priesthood, he mentioneth this word consecrate, or sanctifie, to very good purpose. And Christ also himselfe so speakes in Ioh. 17. 19. For their sakes sanctifie I my selfe. Whence it appeares, that this consecration ought properly to be referred to his humane nature, in which he performed the office of a Priest; as also in which he suffered.

To all those that obey him:] If we be desirous then that the obedience of Christ shall profit vs at all, let vs imitate it. For the Apostles meaning is in this place, that the fruit thereof comes

comes to none but to those which yeeld him obedience. *If we would*
 And in this speech he also recommends faith vnto vs. For *haue Christs*
 neither is Christ, nor any of his benefittes made ours, but *obedience pro-*
 so farre forth as wee receiue both him and them by faith. *fitable vnto vs,*
 Although it seemes he hath put this word *all*, to shew that *we must learne*
 none are shut out from this saluation, if so bee they yeeld *to follow his*
 themselves teachable and obedient to the Gospel of Christ. *example there-*
in.

And is called of God, &c.] Because it was very requisite he *Verf. 10. & 11.*
 should more largely followe the comparison betweene
 Christ and *Melchisedec*, which he hath alreadie touched;
 and that it was needfull to awaken the spirits of the Iewes
 to the greater attention: he so entrencheth into the digression
 following, which continues till the beginning of the se-
 uenth chapter, that yet therewithall he holds himselfe still
 to the point. In the beginning of which digression he pro-
 tests, *that he hath many things to say concerning this matter,* *Verse 11.*
 but their *dulnes* was such as they must be prepared thereun-
 to; that his speech might not bee in vaine, nor his labour
 lost. He tels them that the matter is hard; not to discourage
 them, but rather to whet their attention. For euen as the ea-
 sines of that which wee haue to learne, doth easily beget
 slothfulnes, and negligence; so on the contrarie where the
 matter is more obscure and hard, it stirs vp in vs the greater
 heedfulnes to hearken. Notwithstanding he attributes the
 cause of the difficultie, not to the thing it selfe, but to them.
 For it is certaine that God alwaies speaks in such cleerenes;
 auoyding all obscuritie, or doubtfulnes of speech, that his
 word is called our light: but the brightnes of it is smother-
 ed by our darknes. Which partly comes to passe by the
 blockishnes and dulnes of our minde, and partly by our
 owne carelesnes. For howsoever we be more than very dul-
 lards to vnderstand the doctrine of God; yet besides, there
 is also the vice of vntowardnes planted in our affections.
 For we rather applie our mindes to vanitie, than to the truth
 of God: and either the rebellion of our nature, the cares of
 this world, the concupiscences of the flesh; or some impe-
 diments or other, are as so many cordes wherewithall wee

*Gods word is
 hard, not so
 much in it selfe
 as by reason of
 our blindnes
 and carelesnes.*

1
2
3

often feele our selues to bee hampered. As touching this word, of whom, it is not to be referred to Christ, but to Melchisedec: yet not as to a priuate man, but to him that was the figure of Christ, and in some sort representing his person.

12 For when as concerning the time ye ought to be teachers, yet haue ye neede againe that wee teach you what are the first principles of the word of God: and are become such as haue need of milke, and not of strong meate.

13 For euery one that vseth milke, is inexpert in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

14 But strong meate belongeth to them that are of age, which through long custome haue their wits exercised to discern both good and euill.

Ver. 12.

He is a man of
knowledge that
knowes how
much he
wants.

For when as concerning the time, &c.] This reprehension is marueilous quicke and pearcing, and all to the end hee might rouse vp the Iewes to shake off their slothfulnes. He saith it is a very absurd thing, yea and a great shame for them, to bee yet but nouices, when as concerning the time they ought to haue been great Doctors. You should be able to teach others (saith he) but you are not yet capable your selues of the first principles. For you doe not vnderstand so much as the least poynts of the Catechisme. And to the end he might shame them yet more, he speakes of the first rudiments, which is as if he should haue said, The A, B, C. True it is that wee are to learne all our life long: because he is rightly said to be a man of knowledge, that knoweth how much he yet lacketh of perfect vnderstanding: but yet wee are so to profit in learning, that we doe not alwaies stick fast in the beginnings. And wee are to take good heed that that which *Isaiab* saith be not fulfilled in vs; Precept must be vpon precept, precept vpon precept, line vnto line, line vnto line, here a little, and there a little, *Isai.* 28. 10. But we are rather to looke to our selues, that our proceedings in knowledge be answerable to the time wherein wee first began to learne.

learne. And questionlesse wee are not onely to reckon the yeeres, but euen also the daies one after another; that so every one may stirre vp himselfe to daily profiting. But few there are that take any account of themselves concerning the time past, or that quicken vp themselves for the time to come: and therefore are wee worthily punished for our idlenes, because the greater part stand at a stay euen in the childrens Catechisme. We are also further admonished that by how much the more vnderstanding any hath receiued, so much the more is hee bound to straine himselfe to communicate thereof vnto others: that so none be wise for himselfe in particular onely, but that every one employ his talent to the mutuall edification of his brethren.

W^e should not only count the yeeres but the daies since we began to learn, that so we may looke to our proceedings in knowledge.

And are such as haue need of milke. S. Paul in the 1. Cor. 3. 2. vseth the like Metaphor, where hee blameth them for the same fault: or at the least not very much diuers from this. For he saith they were not able to beare strong meate, because they were carnall. *Milke* then is the doctrine of the first beginnings, to enter them which as yet know nothing. S. Peter takes it in another sense, when hee wils vs to desire the sincere milke of the word, that wee may grow thereby, 1. Pet. 2. 2. For there is a double infancie: one in malice, and another in vnderstanding. S. Paul saith in another place, Be not children in vnderstanding, but in malice, 1. Cor. 14. 20. So then they which are so tender and delicate that they cannot receiue a doctrine a little higher than the first rudiments, are called children by way of reproch. For the true vse of the ministerie of the word is to frame vs in such wise as we may grow to be perfect men, according to the measure of the age of the fulnes of Christ; and not to be as children wauering and carried about with euery winde of doctrine: as it is said, Ephes. 4. 13. 14. I grant, those are to be borne with that haue not yet tasted Christ, if so be they be not yet capable of *strong meate*: but if hee which ought to increase according to the time he hath had, doth notwithstanding alwaies continue in his infancie, he is vnworthie to be pardoned. For we know that *Isaiab* brands the repro-

bates

bates with this marke, that they are still weanlings, chap. 28. It is yery certaine that the doctrine of Christ doth as well administer milke vnto children, as strong meat vnto those that are of age: but even as the childe is nourished with the milke of the nurce, not to be alwaies tyed to the teate, but that by little and little it may be framed to receiue more stronge meat: so also must we at the first sucke the milke of the scripture, that in processe of time we may be sustained by the bread of the scripture. Moreouer he puts such a difference betweene milke and strong meate, that in the meane while he signifieth that both of them are the wholsome doctrine: but the ignorant are begunne withall after one manner, and those which are already instructed, are confirmed after another.

Verse. 13.

Whofoener vsesh milke:] He meanes those, who in regard of their weaknesse are not capable of higher points of doctrine. For otherwise he which is already a strong man, will not disdain milke. But he here reprooues childishnesse in *vnderstanding*, which is the cause that God is alwaies constrained to lisse, as it were, still vnto vs. He saith then, that such kind of children are not of capacitie to receiue the word of *righteousnesse*: vnderstanding by the word *righteousnesse*, that perfection whereof he will speake by and by after. For in my iudgement the Apostle medleth not here with the question of our Iustification before god: but rather takes this word more simply for the puritie of that knowledge which brings vs to perfection: which office *S. Paul* attributes to the Gospel, Col. 1. 28. As if he should haue said, those who flatter themselues in their dulnesse and ignorāce, are excluded from the pure knowledge of Christ, and by this meanes the doctrine of the Gospel becoms vnfruitfull vnto them, because they neuer come to the point; nay, they indeauour not to come any thing neere vnto it.

Verse 14.

“Or, for those that are of age.”

But strong meat is for the perfect, &c.] He calls those *perfect*, which are come to the age of discretion. For he opposeth them to *children*: as 1. Cor. 2. 6. And 14. 20. Also Eph. 4. 13. for the age of man which is betweene infancie, and old age,

age, is as it were the perfection of mans life: but he calleth those which are spirituall; *Men in Christ*, by a figure. Now he would that all Christians should be such, as that they might attaine an habite of true vnderstanding by continual exercise, to *discerne betweene good and euill*. For otherwise we are not taught in the truth as we ought, vnlesse beeing grounded thereupon, we be furnished with artillerie against all the lies of Satan. For this cause it is called, The sword of the Spirit, or the spirituall sword. Eph. 6. 17. And S. Paul notes the vse of the same doctrine, when he saith, To the end we be not carried about with euery wind of doctrine, Eph. 4. 14. For to speake truely, what shall we make of faith, if it continue shaken, and hang in suspence betweene truth and lies? will it not be corrupted with error euery minute of an houre? And the Apostle not contenting himselfe to say in one word *vnderstanding*, putteth *Wittes*: meaning all their powers, by which they vnderstand and iudge; to shew that they must neuer rest till they bee so fully furnished on all sides with the word of God, and armed to fight, that Sathan may haue no aduantage of entrance into vs by any of his fallacies. Now by this it may appeare what Christianitie there is in the Papacie, where not onely the most blockish ignorance goeth vnder the shadow of simplicitie, but it is also straitly forbidden them to aspire to any sound or certaine knowledge. It is easie I say to iudge, with what spirit those are lead, which scarcely permit to touch with the fingers ende, that which the Apostle commands to be handled and studied daily: they will make men beleue that that is a negligence praise-worthie, which the Apostle reprooues so sharply: yea they take away the worde of God, which is the onely rule to discern, whereas on the contrary the Apostle doth here pronounce that it is necessarie for all Christians to be able to discern. But fearefull it is to be spoken; we shall finde many euen amongst those who haue libertie to profit both in hearing and in reading, who neuer yet knewe what it is to bee held captiues vnder this diuellish prohibition, of not reading the holy Scriptures; that euen a-
mongst

mongst them I say, there is no lesse carelesnesse, than if the doctrine were wholly forbidden them. Thus for want of exercise we are blindfolded still, and destitute of all sound iudgement.

CHAP. VI.

- 1 *Therefore, leaving the doctrine of the beginning of Christ, let vs be led forward vnto perfection, not laying againe the foundation of Repentance from dead workes, and of faith towards God.*
- 2 *Of the doctrine of Baptismes, and laying on of hands, &c. of the resurrection from the dead, and of eternall iudgment.*

Verf. 1.

W *Herefore leaving, &c.*] After he hath sharply reprooued them, he exhorteth them that in leauing the beginnings, they goe on forward ayming to the marke. For he calles *the doctrine of beginning*, the rudiments by which the ignorant are to begin, when they be receiued into the Church. Now in that he commands them to leaue such rudiments, or beginnings, his meaning is, not that the faithfull should forget them, but that they should not sticke fast, as it were, in them: the which is better known by the similitude of *laying the foundation*, which by and by followeth. For when an house is to be builded, men must neuer shrink away from the foundation: and yet notwithstanding it were a mockerie to be alwaies about that, & to goe no further. For howsoever the foundation of the building is to be laid, yet he which shall alwaies busie himselfe about that, neuer fitting or preparing matter wherewithall to raise vp the building; shall he not busie himselfe foolishly, and in vaine? In a word, as we are to beginne by the foundation, so the labour of the master builder is to hasten that the house also be raised vp in due season. The like is it in Christianitie. For the foundation is laid in vs by learning

ning the rudiments: but by and by after a more highe doctrine ought to follow, which may finish vp the whole building. Wherefore those who alwaies sticke in the first rudiments, goe forward but ill; because they propound no end vnto themselues. As if the master workman imploying his whole labour about laying the foundation, should vtterly neglect to build any thing vpon it. And therefore he would haue our faith so laid in the beginnings, that it should still rise higher and higher, vntill at the last it bee perfected by continuall increases.

We ought not to content our selues with good beginnings, but to aime to perfection.

Of repentance from dead workes.] He had respect here to the forme vsed in the Catechisme. From whence wee may draw a probable coniecture that this Epistle was not written by and by after the publishing of the Gospel, but rather after there was some forme of gouernment vsed in the Churches. The forme was, that he which was newly instructed in religion, made a confession of his faith, before hee was baptized. Now there were certaine articles, the which the Pastor demanded of them: as may be seene by many testimonies of the ancient Fathers: and the examination was chiefly vpon the confession of faith, which wee commonly call the Symbole or Creede of the Apostles. This was as the first entrance into the Church, for those who being already of age, meant to become Christians; as those who before were strangers from the faith in Christ. The Apostle makes mention of this custome, because no long time was giuen to such new conuerts to be taught in the first grounds of the Christian religion. For a schoolmaster teacheth children their A, B, C: because they might soorthwith come to know greater things.

But let vs consider what the Apostle saith. He names *repentance and faith*, wherein consists the whole perfection of the Gospell. For what other thing doth Christ commaund to his Apostles, but that they should preach faith and repentance? Luk. 24.47. And therefore when S. *Paul* meant to protest that he had faithfully discharged his dutie, he alleageth for himselfe that he had diligently and continually taught them.

them from house to house, to imprint these two things in the hearts of his Auditors, to wit, Repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Iesus Christ, Act. 20. 20. 21. May it not seeme absurd then that the Apostle should command them here to leaue faith and repentance, wherein they were to perseuere the whole course of their liues? But in adding *from dead workes*, he shewes that he speakes of the first repentance, when men began first to be Christians. For although euery sinne be a dead worke, because it begets death, or, because it proceedes from the spirituall death of the soule; yet notwithstanding all the faithfull which are already regenerate by the Spirit of God, are not properly said to repent themselves of dead workes. True it is, that regeneration is but begun in them; but how little soeuer this seede of the new life be in them, yet that is the cause why they are no more reputed dead in his sight. Wherefore the Apostle comprehends not all repentance in generall, wherein we ought carefully to meditate, and to exercise our selues day and night: but he onely meanes that beginning of repentance, by which those who being euen newly conuerted to the faith, did enter into the way of newnes of life. Also the word *faith*, signifies that brieife summe of the doctrine of godlines, which is commonly called the Articles of the Faith. Hereunto also appertaines, *The resurrection from the dead*, and *eternall iudgement*. For these two things are the greatest secrets of the heauenly wisdom: yea euen the very marke of all our religion, whereat wee ought to aime all our whole life. But because one and the same thing is taught otherwise to the rude and ignorant, than to those that haue profited somewhat already; the Apostle notes the common forme of questioning; *Doeſt thou beleene the resurrection of the dead? Doeſt thou beleene there is an eternall life?* These are things fit for children, and onely for once: wherefore to come and demaund the same things againe, were but to go backward.

The points of
catechisme v-
sed in the Pri-
matine Church.

Verſ. 2.

Of the doctrine of Baptismes:] Some reade these two members of Baptismes and doctrine apart: but I had rather reade

reade them together; of the doctrine of Baptismes: although I expound it otherwise than others doe: to wit, that it is a forme of speech by way of apposition, as the Grammarians call it: as thus, not laying againe the foundation of repentance, of faith toward God, of the resurrection from the dead: which is the doctrine of Baptismes, and the imposition of hands. Therefore if these two members, The doctrine of Baptismes, and the laying on of hands, be inclosed by a parenthesis, it will agree best with the order of the text. For if wee reade them not by way of apposition, there will an absurditie follow, in that one and the same thing is twice repeated. For what doctrine is there in Baptisme, but that which he here recites of faith towards God, of repentance, of eternall iudgement, and such like? Moreouer, *Chrysostome* thinkes the Apostle puts Baptismes here in the plurall number, because they did in a manner abolish the first Baptisme by returning to the first rudiments. To which opinion I agree not: for this doctrine is not appointed to many Baptismes. But hee calles Baptismes, the ceremonies and forme which they vsed in publike Baptisme, or the daies appointed to baptise.

He ioyneth the *laying on of hands* with Baptisme, because as there were two orders of those which were newly instructed, so was there also a double ceremonie. For those who were strangers came not to Baptisme, till they had made confession of their faith: therefore as touching these, the order of instruction and catechising went before Baptisme. But the children of the faithfull, in as much as they were adopted from their mothers wombe, and appertained to the bodie of the Church, by the right of the promise, they were baptized from their infancie: and after they were growne to some discretion, and had been instructed in the faith, they also presented them to be publicly catechised. Thus it was done to these after Baptisme: but then another signe was added, to wit, the imposition of hands. This onely place witnesseth sufficiently that the originall of this ceremonie came from the Apostles: which notwithstanding hath

*The institution
of laying on of
hands is to be
retained: but
the superstition
must be cor-
rected.*

hath since been turned to superstition: which the world hath almost alwaies been accustomed to doe with good and holy ordinances, erring and degenerating still to corruptions. For some haue made vs belecue it is a Sacrament, whereby the spirit of regeneration is conferred. By which fancie they haue dismembred Baptisme: for they haue transported that which is proper vnto it, to the imposition of hands. Know we then that this ceremonie was instituted by the first authors, to the end it might be a solemne manner of prayer, as *S. Augustine* calles it. True it is that by this signe they approoued of the faith of those who were already out of the state of infancie: but they meant nothing lesse than thereby to rent and teare in pieces the vertue of Baptisme. Wherefore wee are at this day to keepe the pure institution, and to correct the superstition. Besides, this place serueth vs to prooue the Baptisme of little children. For to what purpose should one selfesame doctrine be called, to some the doctrine of Baptismes, and to others the laying on of hands: vnlesse that the latter sort were instructed in the faith, after they had already receiued Baptisme, so as there remained no more vnto them, but the imposition of hands?

3 *And this will we doe if God permit.*

4 *For it is vnpossible that they which were once lightened, and haue tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the holy Ghost,*

5 *And haue tasted of the good word of God, and of the powers of the world to come:*

or, fall again. 6 *If they fall away should be renewed againe by repentance: seeing they crucifie againe to themselves the Sonne of God, and make a mocke of him.*

Verf. 3.

A*nd this will we do, &c.* Behold here a terrible and fearful threatning: but the Apostle thus thunders, to the end the Iewes should not flatter themselves too much in their carelesnes, by despising the grace of God. As if he should say, there is no staying till to mortow, because this opportunitie

opportunitie of going forward will not last alwaies. For it is not in the power of man to passe from the entrance vnto the marke, as oft as pleaseth him, but the finishing of our course is a particular gift of God.

That those which were once inlightened,] This place hath Ver. 4.
giuen many occasion to reiect this Epistle, and especially because the Nouatians armed themselves therewith to denie pardon to those that had falne. Those therefore of the West especially, haue doubted whether this Epistle were to be beleeued, because they were pressed with the Nouatian sect, and had not knowledge enough to refute their arguments. But when we haue skanned the Apostles meaning, we shall by and by see there is nothing here that doth any way fauour so absurd an error. Others who acknowledge the authoritie of this Epistle, and allow it for holy; willing to auoid the absurditie, doe winde themselves out from it, onely by way of cauill. For some there are who take this word *impossible*, for difficult, or, for a thing that very rarely comes to passe: the which is farre wide from the signification of the word. There are some others, howbeit more in number; who restraine it to that repentance, whereby newe Conuerts were wont to be prepared vnto baptisme in the auncient Church. A like matter; as if the Apostle had inioyned them that were conuerted to fast, or to doe some such like thing. Moreouer what great thing should the Apostle haue said, if he had denied that that kind of repentance which is but a dependance of Baptisme, might be renewed againe? He threatens an horrible vengeance of God to fall vpon all those that reiect the grace of God which they haue once receiued. What grauitie or waight were then I pray you in this sentence, and what terrible thunderbolt were there in it to feare those who were foolishly become secure and carelesse, if so be it did only admonish vs that there were no place left for the first repentance? for so this would stretch it selfe to all kinde of sinne. What shall we say then? for seeing the Lord offereth mercie to all without exceptio: what reason is there that any (by such an absurditie) should
I be

be debarred of it for any cause whatsoever.

*Falles, general,
and particular.*

*Great difference between
falling into
some particular
sinne: and a
finall apostacie*

*Who they be
that are exclu-
ded from hope
of pardon.*

The knot then of this question is in these words, *if they fall againe.* So then whosoever shall vnderstand the force thereof, shall easily winde himselfe out of all difficultrie. Now it must be noted, that there is a double falling: the one particular, the other generall: He which hath failed in one kind, yea be it that he hath failed in many kinds, such a one is fallen from the state of a Christian man. Thus all sinnes are so many falls. But the Apostle disputes not here of theft, periurie, murder, drunkennes, adulterie, or of some such like vice; but he speakes of a finall falling away from the gospel, so as the sinner offends not God onely in one kinde, but wholly renounceth his grace. And to the ende this may be the better vnderstood, there must be an antithesis supplied betweene the graces of God which he hath recited, and this fall. For he *fall*es away, who *renolts from the word of God*, who *quencheth the light of it*, who *deprines himselfe of the tast of the beauenly gift*, who *forsakes his participation of the holy Spirit*. This is wholly to renounce God. We see now then, who they be whom hee excludeth from the hope of pardon: to wit, those Apostatates, who runne away from the knowledge of the Gospel of Christ, which before they had receiued; and from the grace of God; which cannot befall any, but such a one as sinneth against the holy Ghost. For he which violates the second Table of the lawe, or transgresseth the first table by ignorance, is not yet guiltie of such a reuolting: neither doth God so deprive any of his grace (the Reprobate excepted) as that he leaues them without any hope of pardon.

Question.

Answer.

If any demaund why the Apostle maketh mention here of such an Apostacie, seeing he writ to the faithfull, who were farre enough off from so wicked a disloyalty? I answer, he shewes them the daunger thereof betimes, that beeing warned; they might be armed against it. And let vs obserue it well; for when we erre from the right way, we are not onely readie to excuse our faults to others, but are as ready to beguile our selues. Satan then steales in vpon vs, and by subtile

subtile sleights drawes vs away: so as we are fallen, whilest we thinke we stand. Thus wee fall by degrees, till at the last we runne headlong into destruction. And it is a thing which common experience doth daily teach vs in very many. Therefore it is not without cause that the Apostle forewarneth all the Disciples of Christ to looke vnto themselves in time. For long negligence growes easily more and more vpon vs as a Lethargie: and after that followes an alienation of minde and affections. Now wee are yet to note by the way with what titles and commendations hee adorne the knowledge of the Gospell. He calles it an *inlightening*: from whence it followes, that men are blinde till Christ, which is the light of the world, doe inlighten them. He calls it *the taste of the heauenly gift*: thereby signifying, that the gifts which are conferred vnto vs in Christ, are farre aboue nature, or the world: and yet notwithstanding that they are tasted by faith. He calles it *the partaking of the holy Ghost*: because it is he that distributes to euery one (according as he wil) al that light and vnderstanding, without which none can say, that Iesus is the Lord, 1. Cor. 12. 3. as also that hee opens the eyes of our vnderstanding, and reueales Gods secrets vnto vs. He calles it *the taste of the good word of God*: thereby signifying, that Gods will is not manifested vnto vs in the same hand ouer head, but that it brings therewithall vnto vs a sweete delectation. In a word, by this epithite hee shewes what difference there is betweene the Law and the Gospell: because the Law containes in it nothing but seueritie and iudgement: but the Gospell is a sweete and gracious testimony of the loue of God, and of his fatherly kindness towards vs. Lastly, he calles it *the taste of the powers of the world to come*: whereby he signifies, that by faith we are receiued into the heauenly kingdome, that in Tpirit wee might behold that blessed immortalitie, which otherwise is hidden from our mindes.

Satan drawes not the wicked into this fearefull sinne at the first push, but by degrees: we are therefore to preuent great faults by auoiding the lesse.

After a long neglect of holy duties, followes an alienation of the minde and affections.

1

2

3

4

5

Let vs assure our selues then that the Gospell is not knowne of vs to any purpose, but by the illumination of the holy Ghost: and that in such wise, that being carried aboue

Obiection.

Answer.

*The faithfull
are sanctified
effectually by
the spirit of re-
generation: but
the reprobates
are only sprink-
led with some
taste of grace.*

*These terrible
thunderbolts
are only to beat
down the pride
of the flesh: and
not to trouble
the peace of our
consciences.*

the world, wee be raised vp into heauen: and hauing once knowne the goodnes of God, we rest our selues in his word. But here ariseth a new question, how it can be that he which hath once attained all this, should yet afterward fall away? For the Lord calles none effectually but his elect: and Saint *Paul* witnesseth *Rom. 8. 14.* that those are truly his children, who are led by the Spirit: and he teacheth that it is a certain pledge of our adoption, when Christ hath once made vs partakers of his Spirit. For the elect are out of danger to fall finally, or to death. Why? Because the Father who hath giuen them to Christ his custodie is greater than all: and Christ promiseth that he will be carefull ouer them all, that none of them shall perish, *Ioh. 17. 12.* I answered, that all this is very true: first, that God onely doth the elect the honour to giue them the spirit of Regeneration, and that they are discerned from the reprobate, because by meanes thereof they are reformed according to his image. Secondly, that they receiue the earnest of the Spirit in hope of the heavenly inheritance, and haue the Gospell sealed vp in their hearts by the same Spirit. But I say that this hinders not that hee should not sprinkle the reprobate also with the taste of his grace, or that hee should not illuminate their mindes with some sparkles of his light, or, as if he should not cause them to feele his goodnes, yet in some sort to ingraue his word in their hearts. Otherwise where were then that temporarie faith, whereof *S. Marke* speakes in his fourth chapter, *17. verse?* There is euen in the reprobates then a certaine kinde of knowledge, which afterward vanisheth away; either because it had not taken such deepe roote in their hearts as it should, or els suffering the same to be choked, they degenerate. Now the experience and consideration of these things is a bridle by which the Lord holds vs in feare and in humilitie: and in very deede without this, wee see how men are naturally inclined to retchlesnes, and foolish confidence. Although our care ought to be such, that it should no way trouble the peace of our conscience. For the Lord at one instant doth both comfort faith, and beate downe the flesh: and

and therefore would hee that faith should remaine as in a sure port, and should quietly stand fast: but hee exerciseth the flesh with diuers combates, least being idle and at ease, it should fall to follie.

That they should be renned, &c.] Although this seeme very hard, yet notwithstanding hee that is thus punished for his Apostasie, hath none occasion to accuse God of crueltye. Neither is this repugnant to other places of scripture, where the mercie of God is offered to sinners, as soone as they turne, Ezech. 18. 27. for there repentance is required: where-with he that hath once reuolted from the Gospell, was neuer truely touched. For such being deprived of the spirit of God, as they haue well deserued, are cast off into a reprobate sense: that so being vnder the power of the Diuell, they might neuer cease till they bee falne into perdition. By this meanes it comes to passe that they heape sinne vpon sinne, till at the last being senselesse, they despise God; or els hate him as people vtterly desperate. This is the end of all Apostataes: to wit, that first being smittē with a senselesse blockisnes, they feare nothing: or els in terror they apprehend God as an angrie Iudge, because they cannot escape him. To bee short, the Apostle admonisheth that repentance is not in the will of man, but that God onely giueth it to those who are not vtterly fallen away from the faith. Which admonition is very profitable for vs, least by delaies from day to day, we thrust our selues more and more further off from God. True it is that the wicked haue these scoffes and iests roulling in their mouthes, Tush, it is enough for vs if wee repent of our wickednes when wee are at the last gaspe: but when they are come thither, then they shew by those horrible tortures which they endure in their consciences, that the conuersion of a sinner is not so common and easie a worke as they make themselues and others belecue it is.

If the Lord then onely promiseth pardon but to those that doe truely repent of their iniquities, we neede not marueile if they perish who by despaire, or despising of repentance, doe obstinately runne into their owne destruction.

But if any hauing fallen doe againe recover himselfe, wee may say that such a one came not so farre as to an utter reuolt, howbeit otherwise he had committed grieuous sinnes. *Seeing they crucifie againe to themselves the Sonne of God.* He addeth this also to defend Gods seueritie against the slaunders of men. For if God should pardon Apostataes, he must needes giue his Sonne as a mocking stocke vnto them: vnworthie they are then that God should pardon them. Moreover, the reason why he saith that Christ is crucified againe, is because we die with him vnder this condition, to exercise our selues continually in newnes of life. Those then which fall back againe into death, haue need of a second sacrifice: as we shall see in the tenth chapter. *Crucifie to themselves:* that is to say, as much as in them is. For so they endeavour to doe. And Christ should bee brought againe in triumph by mockage, and dishonour, if men could returne to him when they list, after they haue let loose the bridle vnto themselves to Apostasie and reuolking.

7 *For the earth which drinketh in the raine that commeth oft vpon it, and bringeth forth herbes meete for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing of God.*

8 *But that which beareth thornes and briars, is reprobued, and is neere vnto cursing: whose end is to be burned.*

9 *But beloved, we haue perswaded our selues better things of you, and such as accompanie saluation, though we thus speake.*

10 *For God is not vnrighteous, that hee should forget your worke, and labour of lone, which ye shewed towards his name, in that ye haue ministered vnto the Saints, and yet minister.*

Verf. 7.

FOr the earth &c.] It is a very fit similitude to moue our affections to the desire of profiting in due season. For as the earth cannot bring forth good come in haruest, vnlesse the seede spring vp soone after it is cast into the ground: so if wee will become good fruite, the Lord no sooner sowerh his word, but it should forthwith take root in vs, and should also shew the power of it in our liues. For it is not to be expected

pected it should euer bring forth fruit in vs, if we either suffer it to be choked, or to be corrupted in vs. But as the similitude is very fit; so also are we wisely to apply it to the Apostles meaning. The earth, saith he, which drinkes in the raine, presently after seed time if it brings not forth of the kernell a bastard or wilde grasse, is at the length brought to the ripenesse of good corne, by the blessing of God: so also they that receiue the seede of the Gospel into their hearts, and of this seede doe bring forth a good and naturall blade, doe alwaies grow better and better, till they bring forth ripe fruit. Contrariwise, the earth which hath beene plowed and watered, and yet brings forth nothing *but thornes and briars*, giues no hope to the reaper: but which is worse, the more that which is come forth groweth, the more is he left hopelesse.

Ver. 8.

And therefore the onely remedie is, that the labourer set this field on fire, which is so full of naughtie and vnprofitable grasse. So they also, who by their loose and wicked affections, doe corrupt the seede of the Gospel, that in their life they giue no token at all of profiting and going forward, they shew themselues to be cast-awaies, so as they giue no hope of any good haruest. The Apostle then in this place not onely handles the fruit of the Gospel: but still holds on his exhortation, that we should imbrace the gospel with a cheerefull and readie affection. And that as soone as seede time is done, there do by and by some fruit appeare. Thirdly, that after much and often watering, increasings doe follow. Whereas we haue put *meete hearbes*, or profitable, others translate Hearbs of season. Both significations agree well, but the last is referred to the time, the first to the quality. As for the allegoricall senses wherewithall expositours doe please themselues, I let them passe, because they are far wide from the authors meaning.

But beloved We are perswaded better of you, &c.] Because the former sentences were like thunderings, by which the readers might be ouerwhelmed, and altogether amazed, it was needfull now to allaie this sharpnesse: and therefore

Verse 9.

he saith, that though he hath thus spoken, it was not because he had conceiued so hard an opinion of them. And truly whosoever he be that doth indeed desire to profit by teaching or exhorting, ought thus to deale with his Disciples, to wit, that he rather increase affection in them, than any way diminish the same. For there is nothing that doth more discourage vs to heare the word of God, than when we see we are reputed for desperate persons. For this cause the Apostle here protests that he admonisheth the Iews, because he had good hope of them, and desired to bring them to saluation. We gather from this practise of the Apostle, that it is needfull to reprove sharply, and with great vehemencie, not the Reprobates onely, but euen the Elect themselves, and those whome we account as the children of God.

*It is profitable
that the elect
themselves
should be some-
times sharply
reprooved.
Obiection.*

For God is not vniust, &c. These words import as much as if he should haue said, that of these good beginnings, he hopes there will be a good ending. But here ariseth a difficultie; for it seemes as if he meant to say that God is beholding vnto men, in regard of that they haue done for him. I hope well saith he, of your saluation, why? *because God is not vnrighteous, that he should forget your workes.* By this it may seeme that he buildes their saluation vpon workes, and brings in God as one indebted vnto them. Thus the Sophisters who oppose the merits of workes to the grace of God, doe debate this point, and insist vpon it very much; God, say they, is not vniust. For from hence they gather, that it should be vniust with God, if he giue not to the merit of workes, the reward of eternall saluation. I answer in fewe wordes, that it is not the Apostles meaning, expressly to deale here about the cause of our saluation; and therefore we are not to iudge of the merit of workes by this place: neither yet can we hence resolve, what it is that is due to workes. The Scripture euery where shews none other cause of our saluation, than the free mercie of God. Now whereas God in many places promisseth reward to workes, this depends vpon his free promise, by which he hath adopted vs for his children, and reconciled vs vnto himselfe, not impu-
ting

Answer.

*No other cause
of our saluati-
on but Gods
free mercie.*

ting our finnes vnto vs. Reward then is appointed vnto workes, not for any merit that is in them, but by the meere liberalitie of God. Yea euen this free recompence of workes proceeding from the free bountie and liberalitie of God, hath no place till we be receiued into fauour by the meanes of Christ. We gather from hence then, that God in doing this, payes nothing that he owes vs, but keepes and fulfilleth that promise, which of his free good will he hath made, because he beholds both our selues and our workes with fauour and pardon; or to speake yet more properly, he considers not our workes so much, as his own grace in our workes. Now ye see how it is, that he forgets not our workes, because in them he acknowledgeth both himselfe, and the worke of his Spirit. This is also that *righteousnesse* which the Apostle meaneth, to wit, because he cannot denie himselfe. Thus this place is agreeable to the sentence of *S. Paul*, where he saith, he which hath begun a good worke in you will performe it to the day of Christ, *Philip. i. 6.* For what shall God finde in vs, whereby he might be moued to loue vs, vnlesse it be that which he hath giuen vs of his own before? In a word, the Sophisters deceiue themselues, who imagine a mutuall relation and correspondencie between the righteousness of God, and the merit of our workes: for in this regard God rather respects himselfe, and his own gifts, that he might perfect vnto the end, that which he hath begunne in vs by his free goodnesse, beeing no way prouoked therevnto by any seruice that comes from vs. Thus (I say) you see what the righteousness of God is in the reward of workes; to wit, because he is faithfull, and true of his promise, and so hath made himselfe debter to vs: not in receiuing any thing of vs, but in promising vs all things freely; as saith *S. Augustine*.

Your labour of loue. By this word he signifies that we must not spare, nor flie any paines, if we will doe our dutie towards our neighbours: for the question is not onely of helping them with siluer, but also with counsell, and industrie, and by all the waies and meanes we can. There is need then of.

Reward is not
giuen vnto
workes for any
merit, but vpon
Gods meere
liberalitie.

God beholds
not our workes,
but rather his
own grace in
our workes.

*Whoſoeuer
meanes to ex-
ercife himſelfe
in the duties of
loue, he muſt
prepare him-
ſelfe to a life
full of a la-
bours.*

*Loue extends
her liberalitie
to all: but to
the houſhold of
faith eſpecially*

*Perſeuerance
in doing good
is a vertue
thin ſowne.*

of great care and diligence in the diſcharge of our dutie in this behalfe: we muſt ſwallow vp many incombrances, and oftentimes put our ſelues in great dangers. Wherefore whoſoeuer meanes to exerciſe himſelfe in the duties of loue, he muſt prepare himſelfe to a life full of labours. He prooues their charitie, *becauſe they miniſtered vnto the Saints, and yet miniſtered.* In which we are admoniſhed not to reſuſe to doe duties to our brethren. Where he names onely and expreſſly the *Saints*, his meaning is not that we are onely bound to them, and to none other: for our charitie ought to extend it ſelfe to all mankind: but becauſe the houſhold of faith, are recommended vnto vs aboue all the reſt; we ought therefore eſpecially to haue regard of them: Gal. 6. 10. For although charitie be prouoked to doe good, partly in regard of God, and partly in regard of the communion of nature, whereby all men are ioyned together; yet by how much the more any one is more neere vnto God, ſo much the more worthie is he that we ſhould help him. Moreouer, according as we know any one to be the childe of God, ſo ought we to loue him with a brotherly affection.

When he ſaith, *they had miniſtered, and doe yet miniſter*, he praiſeth their perſeuerance, which in this regard is a vertue greatly neceſſary. For there is nothing to which we be more inclined, than to waxe wearie in doing good to others. So that howſoeuer we ſhall finde many which are ready for a brunt to helpe their brethren and neighbours, yet perſeuerance therein is a vertue ſo thin ſowne, that the greater part doe either waxe colde, or elſe by and by become careleſſe. And yet notwithstanding this onely text ought continually to prouoke and ſtirre vs vp thereunto: why? becauſe the Apoſtle witneſſeth, that when we exerciſe our charitie towards the Saints, we exerciſe and ſhew the ſame to the *name of God*. For thereby he giues vs to vnderſtand that god accepts in good worth all the pleaſure and dutie which we performe to our neighbours, according to this ſentence, Whatſoeuer you haue done to the leaſt of theſe litle ones, you haue done it vnto me. Math. 25. 40. Alſo, he that giues

to the poore, lends to the Lord, and the Lord shall recompence that which he hath giuen, Prou. 19. 17.

11 But we desire that euery one of you shew the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope vnto the ende,

12 That ye be not slouthfull, but followers of them, which through faith and patience, inherite the promises.

13 For when God made the promise to Abraham, because he had no greater to sweare by, he sware by himselfe,

14 Saying, surely I will abundantly blesse thee, and multiply thee maruailously.

15 And so after he had carried patiently, he enjoyed the promise.

But we desire, &c.] As he hath mingled praises among his exhortations, least he should exasperate their mindes, and prouoke them ouermuch; so also least this mildnesse should smell of flatterie, he freely sheweth them what is yet wanting. You haue giuen testimonie, saith he, of your charitie by many experiences, notwithstanding it yet remaines that your faith be answerable to your charitie. You haue laboured, and bestowed great paines to do seruice vnto your brethren by loue, but you are no lesse to indeauour to increase in faith, that so you may haue a certaine and full assurance before God. Now the Apostle shewes by these words, that the profession of Christianitie contains two parts, which are referred to the two tables of the law. Wherefore whosoever separates the one from the other, will make nothing else but a rent and torne profession. And hereby it appeares what masters those are, who leauing faith, require nothing else but a ciuil innocencie and honestie towards men. This is a prophane philosophie, I say, which contents it selfe onely with an outward maske of righteousness: although to say the truth, it deserues not so much as to be called philosophie, seeing it distributes things so ill which concerns the durie of persons, that it takes away God his right, which ought to be preferred before all things. Let vs

Verse 11.

To teach ciuil
righteousnes
without faith
is a prophane
philosophie.

Faith and cha-
ritie must goe
together.

Plerophoria.

It is a sinne to
doubt of the
truth of that
which God
hath pronoun-
ced.

There is great
difference be-
tweene true
faith, and a ge-
nerall appre-
hension.

remember then that we haue not such a Christian life as is perfect in all his parts, vnlesse wee applie our studies to follow faith and charitie together.

For the full assurance of hope.] Because many who made profession of the Christian faith, were distracted with diuers opinions, or els were inwrapped with many superstitions, he requires that they be so seled in the certaintie of faith, that they now wauer no more, nor remaine in suspence, carried about as they had been wont with euery new inuention of mans braine. Now this commandement belongs to vs all: for as the truth of God is sure and stable in it selfe, so also is it required that our faith which is built and rests it self there-upon be true, certaine, and surmounting all doubtings. See here then what this Greeke word *Plerophoria* imports, to wit, an assured perswasion, whereby the spirit of euery faithfull man concludes and resolues in it selfe, that it is vtterly vnlawful to call into doubt or question those things which God (that cannot lie nor deceiue) hath once pronounced. *Hope*, is here taken for faith, because of the affinitie which is betweene them. Notwithstanding it seemes the Apostle did expressly place it here, because he spake of perseuerance. We may also gather from hence, how farre faith is off from that generall apprehension which is common both to the wicked and euen to the Diuels themselves. For they also belecue that God is iust and true: but yet notwithstanding from hence they conceiue no good hope at all, because they doe not therewithall apprehend the fatherly goodnes of God in Christ. Let vs know then that true faith is alwaies coupled with hope.

He saith to the end, or euen vnto perfection: because they might know they were not yet come thereunto, and therefore that they should bethinke themselves to profit in faith more and more. He vseth this word *care*, or *diligence*, to the end they might vnderstand that they were not to nuzzle themselves vp still in carelesnes, but to bend themselves couragiously to trauaile towards this assurance in good earnest. For it is not a small matter to ascend aboue the hea-
uens;

uens; especially such as we be who are scarce able to creepe vpon the ground. And withall, that it is no small matter to leape ouer so many stumbling blocks of offence: neither is there any thing more difficult than to hold our meditations in heauen and vpon heauenly things, because all the whole strength of our nature bends downwards; Satan also is not wanting to draw our mindes towards the earth and earthly things by infinite deuices. For this cause therefore the Apostle commands vs to flie all carelesnes and sluggishnes of heart.

But that ye follow those who by faith and patience.] Against this lasines, he puts this studie of *following*, and imitation. It is as much then as if he had said, it behooues you to haue a cheerefulnes of heart in perseuering. But this yet hath greater weight, when he aduertiseth them that the Fathers themselves did not obtaine the promises, but with an inuincible strength of faith: for examples doe represent the matter vnto vs with y greater liuelines. If the doctrine should only be proposed simply and plainly, it would not moue vs so much as when we see that that which is required of vs, is fulfilled in the person of *Abraham*. Now the example of *Abraham* is brought in, not because there was none other, but because his example was the most excellent aboue all others. For *Abraham* had this in common with all the faithfull to beleeue: but it is not without great cause that he was established, and called the father of all the faithfull. No marueile therefore if the Apostle doe make speciall choise of him amongst others: as of him vnto whom hee would all men should looke as oft as they would finde a cleere mirror of faith. He saith, *faith and patience*, as if hee should say, a constant faith which hath also patience ioyned therewith. For faith is first required: but because many who at the beginning might seeme to haue an admirable faith, haue yet notwithstanding by and by waxen carelesse; *patience* is a true approbation of that faith which is not vaine, nor such as will vanish with the time. When he saith that we obtaine, & receiue the promises by faith, he beates downe the opinion of merits:.

Verf. 12.

merits: but yet much more cleerely in saying, y^etherby they receiue them as an inheritance. For there is no other right by which we are made inheritors, but the right of adoption.

For When God made &c.] His meaning is to prooue that the grace of God is offered vs in vaine, vnlesse hauing receiued the promise by faith, we keep and nourish it in patience in the middest of our hearts. He proues it by an example, to wit, that when God promised an infinite offspring to *Abraham*, it might seeme to be an incredible thing. *Sara* had bin barren the whole course of her life: and both of them were well stricken in yeeres: so as they were neerer to their graues, than to the vse of the mariage bed. For the strength of procreation was vtterly decayed in them, and the wombe of *Sarah* which had been barren in the flower of her youth was now dead: who then could beleue that of them two should come forth a nation as many in number as the starres in the heauen, or as the sand of the sea? This truly was contrarie to all reason. Notwithstanding *Abraham* waited for the fulfilling of this promise, and feared not to bee deceiued, whilest he rested himselfe vpon the word of God. This circumstance then of the time is to be noted, that we may perceiue the manner of the Apostles argument. And hereunto is that which he afterwards addes to be referred, to wit, that he obtained the promise or blessing: but so, as he waited for that which to any m^as reason was vtterly past all hope. You see now then how we are to giue glorie vnto God: euen to waite for that in patience which yet appeares not to our senses, but being hidden from them, is deferred a long space for the exercising of our patience. Whereas it is said, that *God sware by himselfe*, word for word it is, If I blesse thee not: which forme and manner of swearing we haue expounded in the third chapter. For the name of God is not here expressed, but it must be supplied, because he protests that he would not be holden for a God of truth, if he did not accomplish that which he promised.

*What it is to
giue glorie vnto
God.*

16 For men verily sweare by him that is greater than themselves,

selues, and an oath for confirmation is among them an end of all strife.

17 *So God, willing more abundantly to shew vnto the heires of promise the stablenesse of his counsell, bound himselfe by an oath.*

18 *That by two immutable things whereby it was impossible that God should lie, we might haue strong consolation which haue our refuge to lay hold vpon that hope which is set before vs.*

19 *Which hope we hold or haue, as an anker of the soule, both sure and steadfast, and it entred into that which is within the vaile.*

20 *Whether the forerunner is for vs entred in, euen Iesus that is made an high priest for euer after the order of Melchisedec.*

FOr men verily:] He frames his argument from the lesse to the greater; to wit, If men are to be beleeued, who yet by nature are all of them liars, and that because a confirmation of the name of God is added thereunto: how much more doth God who is the eternall truth it selfe, deserue to be beleeued, when he swears by himselfe? Now he doth enrich this sentence with many words: and in the first place he saith, *that men doe sweare by greater than themselves*, by which he signifies, that for as much as they haue not sufficient authoritie as of themselves, they are faine to borrow the same elsewhere. He also addeth, that there is so great holinesse and religion in an oath, that it sufficeth for a confirmation of that whereunto it is applied; and also it puts an end to all strife, when otherwise the testimonies of men and other proofes doe faile. And shal not he then who is thus called vpon of al for a witnesse, be a sufficient witnesse for himselfe? He which by his authoritie takes away all doubts among others; shall not credit be giuen to his words? If the name of God beeing pronounced with the tongue of man hath so great excellencie and prerogatiue; how much more prerogatiue ought it to haue when God himselfe swears by.

Verse 16.

by his owne name? This you see is the principall thing now in hand: but we are here to note two things by the way:
 1 first, that we ought to sweare by the name of God, when
 2 we are required to sweare: secondly, that an oath is permitted vnto Christians, because it is a lawfull remedie to appease contentions. God doth expressly charge vs that we sweare by his name: and if we mingle any other with his, he protests that it is a prophanation of an oath. Now there are
 1 three speciall reasons of this. For when we are destitute of the meanes to bring the truth to light, it is not lawfull to haue recourse to any other than to God, who is himselfe
 2 the eternall truth. Secondly, because it is he who knoweth the hearts, Ierem. 17. 10. His office is plucked from him, whē any other is called to be a iudge in those things which are hidden from the iudgement of men. Thirdly, because
 3 that not onely in swearing, we call him to witnesse; but we also meane thereby that he should shew his vengeance vpon the partie periured, if we speake and sweare falsely. Therefore it is not to be marueiled at, if he be so seuerely angrie against them which sweare by another name; for it is to take away from him so much of his honour.

Now whereas the scripture doth sometimes vse other formes of swearing; that doth not crosse this doctrine. For the faithfull doe not sweare by the heauen or by the earth, as if they did attribute any diuinitie vnto them, but by such indirect oathes, they haue respect to God onely. For there
 1 are diuers kinds of oathes. The first and the cheifest is this, when we call God for iudge; and doe directly make our
 2 appeale vnto his iudgment seat. The second is, when we name the things that we loue greatly, as our life, our head, or some such other like thing. The third, when we take the creatures
 3 to witnesse in Gods presence. But in all these to speake properly, we sweare by none other than by God. Wherefore they who contend that it is lawfull to ioyn the Saints that are dead as companions with God, and that the right of punishing should be attributed vnto them, such doe no lesse shew their malice than their beastlinesse. Besides, this
 place

this place as hath beene said, teacheth, that there is a lawfull use of an oath among Christians: the which we are to note wel against those giddie spirits, who would willingly bring out of use that holy rule of an oath which God hath giuen in his lawe. For out of question the Apostle here speakes of the manner of an oath, as of an holy thing allowed and approoued of God. And it is also to be noted that he doth not onely say that it was thus in use in old time, but also testifies that it lasteth euen yet to this day. Let vs then take an oath for an helpe to maintaine the truth, when we want other proofes.

It is lawfull to take an oath.

[*So God, willing more abundantly, &c.*] See how the Lord applies himselfe to our dulnesse and slownesse to belecue; and how he vpholds vs; euen as a most gentle father is wont to do his children. Because he seeth that we rest not satisfied with his bare and naked word, he addes an oath, to the end he might the more effectually confirme and ratifie the same in our hearts. And hereby also we may see how profitable and necessarie it is to haue such an assurance of the loue he beares vs, that we might haue no more accasion to wauer or tremble. For as God forbids vs to use his name without cause, or for a light cause, or a thing of nothing, and threatens all them with his sharpe vengeance, who shall rashly and vnadvisedly take vp the same in vaine. And as he also commands that we reuerently use the maiestie of his name; so by both, he shewes that he hath his name in great price and estimation. The certentie then of our saluation must needes be a matter of great consequence, seeing he that forbiddes to take vp his name in vaine, vouchsafeth to sweare to confirme vs in the assurance of it. We may also gather from hence, in what estimation our saluation is before god: seeing that to provide for the certaintie thereof he not onely supports our incredulitie, but leauing as it were part of his own honour, and yeilding much more to our weaknes then he should, doeth yet notwithstanding by this meanes graciously remedie the same.

Ver. 17.

Our saluation is in great account with God seeing he sticks not to confirme vs in the assurance thereof by his oath.

[*To the heires of promise.*] It seemes he specially speaks of

K

the

the Jewes. For although the inheritance came also at the last to the Gentiles: yet the Jewes notwithstanding were the first and lawfull heires: and the Gentiles were onely the second, beeing poore strangers from the same, and were made such beyond the right of nature. According to which *S. Peter* in his first sermon, speaking of the Jewes saith, The promise is made to you and to your children, and to all those that are a farre off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call. *Act. 2. 39.* He doth indeed leaue some place for the inheritours that are strangers, but yet he puttes the Jewes in the first ranke: as also in the third chap. he saith, ye are the childre of the Prophets, & of the couenāt that God made with your fathers. So also in this place, that the Apostle might mooue the Jewes to be the more readie to receiue the benefit of the couenant, he teacheth, that it was confirmed by an oath, principally in regard of them. This sentence doth now also belong vnto vs: for we are come in the place which they haue reiectēd by their incredulitie. We must note then, that *the counsell of God*, of which he here speakes, is all one with that which the Gospel testifies vnto vs; to wit, that none should doubt of the doctrine, whether it were drawne out of the depth of Gods heart or no, but that the faithfull rather should know for a suretie, as oft as they heare the voice of the Gospel, that then the secret counsell of God which was hidden in himselfe, is published and opened vnto them: whereby that which he hath ordained of vs, as touching our saluation, from before the foundations of the world, is now manifested vnto vs.

Ver. 18.

That by two immutable things:] Gods word and his oath are in him two things immutable. As touching men, it is farre otherwise. For their word is not stable, by reason they are subiect to vanitie. But the word of God is adorned with these titles: first, that it is pure and cleane: and that it is like to gold purged seauen times in the fire, *Psal. 12. 7.* yea *Balaam*, who otherwise was a manifestemie of God, is constrained to giue him this testimonie, that He is not like to men, that he should lie or repent. Hath he said it, and shall he

he not doe it? hath he spoken, and shall he not fulfill it? Numb. 23. 19. Thus the word of God, as you see, is a sure trueth, and worthy to be beleueed for his owne authorities sake alone: but when the oath is added thereunto, it is as an ouerplus added aboue the heaped measure. And from hence haue we a singular consolation, to wit, that God which can not beguile vs in speaking, yet not contenting himselfe with his onely promise, addes vnto the same an oath also.

That we which runne, or haue our refuge. By this speech he signifies, that we do not truly put our whole confidence in God, vnlesse beeing destitute of all other helpes, we haue our recourse to the onely bare promise, and there appoint out vnto our selues the place of our freedom, and no where else. Therefore this clause *We which run*, or haue our refuge, doth plainely set forth what feeling we ought to haue of our pouertie, and want, for we will neuer begge abroad as long as we haue any thing at home, neither will we euer run for refuge vnto God, vnlesse our necessities doe constraîne vs. Now when he addes, *to lay hold vpon the hope which is set before vs*, his meaning is, that we neede not goe farre off to seeke the succour whereof we stand in neede, because that God of his free fauour preuent vs, and puts the matter and substance of our confidence in him, euen into our hands. But as by this sentence he meant to stirre vp the Iewes to receiue the Gospel, wherein saluation is offered vnto them: so doth he thereby take away all excuse from the vnbeleeuers, who reiect this grace and fauour when it is thus offered vnto them. And in very deede, this sentence may be more truely spoken since the reuelation of the Gospel, than it might haue beene vnder the publishing of the law: to wit, Say not thou any more in thine heart, who shall ascend vp into heauen? or who shall goe downe into the deepe? or who shall goe ouer the sea? for the word is neere thee, euen in thy mouth, and in thine heart, Deut. 30. 12. Rom. 10. 6, 7, 8. Moreouer in this word *hope*, the effect is taken for the cause. For by this word I vnderstand the promise vpon which our hope is grounded: neither am I of their opinion,

who take hope in this place for the thing hoped for : but we rather adde hereunto, that the Apostle speakes not of a naked promise hanging in the aire, but of a promise which we receiue by faith: or to speake in one word, *hope* here signifies the promise apprehended by faith. By this word *to obtaine*, as also by the word *hope*, he notes out such a constancie as he hath touched heretofore.

Verf. 19.

Which hope we haue as an anker of the soule, &c. It is a goodly similitude in that he compares faith to an *anker* cast out and fast rooted in the word of God. For the truth is, that whilest we flete vp and downe in the salt sea of this world, we are not staied vpon sure and firme ground, but we reele as a shippe to and fro in the middest of the sea, yea euen in a troublesome sea tossed with floods and waues. For the diuell he ceaseth not to raise vp infinite stormes and tempests that might at once ouerturne and drowne our shippe, if so be our anker be not deeply fastened euen to the very bottome. And indeed let vs turne our cies whither soeuer wee will, we shall perceiue no firme land whereupon to stand safely: but which way soeuer our senses doe turne them, we shall see nothing but water : yea such waters, whose waues doe swell, and roare, lifting vp themselues on high, & threatening our destruction. But as the anker is cast into the middest of the water, into an obscure and hidden place, and whilest it lieth so hidden, it keepes the ship in safetrie, that it is not drowned of the waues, vnto which it is exposed and laid open: so ought we to fixe and fasten our hope in God, who is inuisible. Herein stands the difference; that the anker is cast downwards, because it findes fastening in the earth: and our hope is raised vp on high, and flieth into heauen, because it findes nothing vpon earth, or in the world vpon which it may safely rest and stay it selfe securely: neither ought it to rest it selfe vpon the creatures, but onely vpon God. And as the cable to which the anker is fastened, ioynes the shippe with the earth by a long and inuisible distance; so the truth of God is a cable by which we are knit vnto him, so as there can be no distance of place so farre off, nei-

*Our hope finds
no footing vpon
earth: and
therefore we
cast it not
downwards
but upwards.*

neither yet any darknes be it neuer so thicke, that can let vs to cleaue still fast vnto him. Being thus made fast vnto God, howsoeuer wee must fight indeede daily against infinite stormes and tempests, yet are we notwithstanding so out of danger, that we shall not perish with our shippe. And therefore he saith, that it is an *anchor both sure and stedfast*. For no tempestuousnes of waues can be so great, that they should be able to rent the anchor in pieces, or to breake the cable, or that the shippe by meanes thereof should be clouen in twaine. This indeed falles out vpon the Sea: but the power of God is farre otherwise to sustaine and keepe vs: and is otherwise also, as well in regard of the efficacie of hope, as of the stablenes of the word of God.

And it entresth into that which is within the vaile. We haue said alreadie, that faith shall finde nothing which shall not be fleeting and vanishing, till it come neere vnto God: of necessitie therefore it must pearce euen into heauen. But because the Apostle hath to doe with the Iewes, hee alludes to the ancient Tabernacle, and saith that they must not rest themselues in the things which are scene, but that they must enter euen into the secret place, which is hidden behind the vaile: as if he should say, you must passe beyond all the externall figures and old shadowes, that faith may rest it selfe vpon Christ alone. Now wee are to note this reason well, to wit, that as Christ is entred into heauen, euen so ought our faith to ascend vp thither after him. For by this we are taught to cast the eye of our faith vpon nothing els. For men shall lose all their labour to seeke God in his maiestie, seeing it is too high for them to attaine vnto: but it is Christ who reacheth vs his hand to bring vs into heauen. And this was shadowed out of olde euen vnder the Law. For the high Priest entred into the Sanctuarie not only in his own name, but also in the name of all the people: he bare, as you would say, the twelue tribes in thither in his breast and vpon his shoulder, when in remembrance of them, twelue precious stones were imbroidered vpon his breast-plate, and their names engrauen vpon the two precious stones which hee

*Faith must
passe beyond
all externall
shadowes, that
it may rest it
self vpon Christ
alone.*

Verse 20.

had vpon his shoulders: so as in the person of one onely man, all entred in together into the Sanctuarie. The Apostle therefore to very great purpose doth admonish vs, *that our high Priest is for vs entred into heauen*: because he entred not in thither onely for himselfe, but for vs also: and therefore we neede not to feare that the entrance into heauen should be shut vp against our faith, which faith is neuer separate from Christ. Now because we ought to follow Christ being gone before, therefore he calles him the *forerunner*.

CHAP. VII.

Gen. 14. 18.

- 1 For this Melchisedec was King of Salem, the Priest of the most high God, who met Abraham, as he returned from the slaughter of the Kings, and blessed him:
- 2 To whom also Abraham gaue the tithe of all things: who first is by interpretation the King of righteousness: after that, he is, also King of Salem, that is King of peace,
- 3 Without father, without mother, without kindred, and hath neither beginning of his daies, neither end of life: but is likened to the Sonne of God, and continueth a Priest for ever.

Verse 1.

OR this Melchisedec &c. Hitherunto he hath flood vpon exhortations, whereby hee hath stirred vp the Iewes diligently to consider of what weight this comparison of Christ with Melchisedec is. In the conclusion of the former chapter, he alleaged againe the place of the 110. Psalme, that he might againe returne to the matter, from that digression which he had made. Now then he goes on forward with his purpose which hee touched before; albeit in few words. For he recites by piece-meale (as they say) all things that are to be considered in Melchisedec; wherein he is like to the Sonne of God. Now wee are not to wonder why he tarryeth so carefully in this point: for certainly it was no small matter, to finde a man in a countrie fraught

fraught with so many corruptions, that should vphold the pure worship and seruice of God. For, on the one side hee was neighbour to the Sodomites, and Gomortheans, and on the other side to the Canaanites: that hee was inuironed on euery side with men that were Infidels. Moreouer, all the world was then fallen into such impietie, that it is hardly to be beleueed whether God were purely worshipped in any place, except in *Abrahams* family. For his father and grandfather, in whom ought to haue been the greatest puritie and sinceritie, had long before corrupted themselues with all kinde of Idolatrie, Iosh. 24. 2. This then was a thing worthie of memorie, to wit, that there should be a King at that time which not onely fauoured true religion, but also himselfe did exercise the office of a Priest. And so indede was it requisite that all things should bee excellent and perfect in him who was the figure of Christ. Now that Christ was shadowed out in him, it appeares in the Psalme. For *Dauid* said not at randon, Thou art a Priest for euer after the order of *Melchisedec*: but by this his speech rather, a most high and excellent mysterie was left vnto the Church. But now let vs see the parts as they lie in order, to wit, wherein the Apostle makes Christ like *Melchisedec*.

The first similitude is in the name. For it is not without a mysterie that he was called *king of righteousness*. For howsoeuer this honour be giuen to Kings that rule with equitie and iustice, yet notwithstanding this title doth rightly and onely indeed belong to the Lord Iesus Christ: who not onely exerciseth his rule and dominion vprightly, as others: but doth communicate vnto vs the righteousness of God, partly when hee causeth that wee are accounted righteous by the free reconciliation: and partly when hee renueth vs by his spirit, to the end we may liue faithfully, and holily. He is then called the *king of righteousness* by the effect, because he powreth out his righteousness vpon all that are his: whence it followes that out of his kingdom, nothing reigneth in men but sinne. And therefore the Prophet *Zacharie* placing him in the possession of his kingdome, as by a solemne edict of

God, adorne him with this title; Reioyce greatly O daughter Zion (saith he) behold thy righteous King commeth to thee, Zach. 9. 9. thereby signifying vnto vs that the righteousness whereof without this wee should bee destituted, is brought vnto vs by the comming of Christ.

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The second similitude which the Apostle notes, is in the kingdome of *peace*. Now this *peace* is the fruite of that righteousness whereof hee spake. Herehence it followes that wheresoeuer the kingdome of Christ shall be spread, there of necessitie must this peace be in abundance, as is shewed by these places following; Isai. 2. 4. and 9. 7. and 11. 6. and 65. 25. and other the like. Moreouer, because *peace*, according to the Hebrues, signifies prosperitie, or an happie estate; wee may take it in this sense euen in this place: notwithstanding I had rather vnderstand it of that inward peace, which setteth consciences at quiet and in securitie before the throne of God. Wee cannot possibly esteeme of of this benefit according as the excellencie thereof doth require, vnlesse we be taught by the contrarie, what miserie it is to be tormented continually with vnquietnes of conscience: which all of vs must needes feelee till such time as we being reconciled vnto God in Christ, haue our consciences thereby quieted.

In what sense
the Hebrues
usually take
this word
peace.

Peace of con-
science can ne-
uer be rightly
esteemed, till
we haue been
exercised with
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Verf. 3. *Without father.*] I had rather to say so, than of an vnknowne father, as *Erasmus* doth translate. For the Apostle meant to signifie something more expressely, than to say that the race of *Melchisedec* was vnknowne, or base, and of little renowme. Neither doe I greatly stand about the discussing of an obiection which some doe make here: to wit, if wee take it so, the truth should not bee answerable to the figure, because Christ hath a father in heauen, and a mother in earth. For the Apostle presently after expounds his owne meaning, when he addes *Without kindred*. He doth then exempt *Melchisedec* from the common order of being borne: thereby shewing that he was eternall, so as none are to goe search out among men from what race he newly issued. It is certaine that he was begotten of a father and a mother: but the

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the Apostle speakes not of him as of a priuate man : but rather as of one clothed with the person of Christ. And therefore he forbids vs to consider ought in him but that which the Scripture teacheth. For in handling all those things which belong to Christ, it is needfull to deale with such reuerence, that wee know nothing but that which proceedes out of the mouth of God. Now seeing the Spirit of God, bringing in the rarest and most excellent King of that time, yet makes no mention at all of his birth, neither yet afterwards speakes any one word of his death ; is it not as much as if by this meanes his eternitie had been set foorth vnto vs ? Now that which was shadowed in *Melchisedec*, was truly manifested in Christ. Thus then we are to content our selues with this mediocritie, that when the Scripture proposeth *Melchisedec* vnto vs as a man that was neuer borne, or which neuer died ; it shewes vnto vs as in a mirror, that there is neither beginning nor end in Christ.

Moreouer, from hence we also learne what reuerence and sobrietie is required to be in vs, as touching the spirituall mysteries of God. For the Apostle is not onely willingly ignorant of that which he findes not in the whole Scriptures, but would that wee should be ignorant of it also. For questionlesse it is not lawfull to pronounce any thing of Christ at randon, nor yet after our shallow capacitie. *Melchisedec* then is not to be considered here as a man of some meane place, but as an holy and sacred figure of Christ. Neither are we to thinke that either his genealogie or death was omitted to be spoken of by chance, or vnaduisednes : but that the holy Ghost rather did it of purpose, to the end he might raise vp our mindes aboue the common order of men. For this cause their coniecture is very vnlikely who say, that *Melchisedec* was *Shem* one of the sonnes of *Noah*. For come we once to speake of a certaine and knowne man, this third similitude betweene *Melchisedec* and Christ will not be firme. But was likened to the Sonne of God. That is to say, so farre foorth as the manner of likenes would beare. For the proportion must alwaies bee held which is betweene the truth.

truth and the signe. For those who to make him like in effect and truth, doe forge that hee descended from heauen; doe make themselues ridiculous. It is enough that we see in him some resemblances of Christ: as in a picture we may see the liuely portrature of a mans face, and yet notwithstanding there is great difference betweene a man, and his picture. Neither doe I think it needfull to refute the railings of those who dreame that Christ then appeared, or the holy Ghost, or some Angell: vnlesse some wise man would dispute with *Postel* and other such frantike fellowes. For this companion is no lesse bold to boast that hee is *Melchisedec*, than those mad heads (whereof *S. Hierome* makes mention) who did heretofore imagine that this *Melchisedec* was the very Son of God, and the Christ.

4 Now consider how great this man was, vnto whom euen the Patriarke *Abraham* gaue the tithes of the spoyle.

Numb. 18. 21.
Deut. 18. 4.

5 For verily they which are the children of *Leui*, which receiue the office of the Priesthood, haue a commandement to take, according to the law, tithes of the people (that is of their brethren) though they came out of the loynes of *Abraham*.

6 But he whose kinred is not counted among them, receiued tithes of *Abraham*, and blessed him that had the promises.

7 And without all contradiction, the lesse is blessed of the greater.

8 And here men that die, receiue tithes: but there he receiue them, of whom it is witnessed that he liueth.

9 And to say as the thing is, *Leui* also which receiveth tithes, paid tithes in *Abraham*:

10 For he was yet in the loynes of his father *Abraham* when *Melchisedec* met him.

Vers. 4.

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Now consider &c.] This is the fourth obseruation touching the comparison betweene Christ and *Melchisedec*, to wit, that *Abraham* paid him tithes. Now although tithes were ordained for many causes, yet notwithstanding the Apostle in this place hath respect onely to that which serues

to the present purpose. One cause why the tithes were paid to the Levites was, because they themselves also were children of *Abraham*, to whose seed the land was promised. Wherefore by right of succession they were to have a portion of the land. Now because they were deprived from having any possession in the land, they are recompensed in tithes. Secondly, in as much as they were to be wholly employed in the service of God, and in the publique ministration; it was therefore good reason they should be maintained upon the common costes and charges of the people. The rest of the Israelites therefore ought them their tithes as the wages and recompence of their office and labour. But these causes serve nothing at all to this present purpose: and therefore the Apostle omits them. There is this onely for the present, to wit, that although the people offered the tenths to God as a sacred tribute, yet the Levites received them. Whereby it appears, that this was no small honour unto the Levites, because God did put them as it were into his owne place. When as *Abraham* then, who was one of the most excellent servants and prophets of God, did offer tithes to the Priest *Melchisedec*; he thereby confessed that *Melchisedec* was in degree of honour above him. So as if the Patriarche *Abraham* be set among the common order of men, in comparison of him then, his dignitie must needs be very excellent.

This Epichite of *Patriarch* is put by way of amplification, for it is no small title of honour for *Abraham* to be called Father in the Church of God. Thus therefore standes the argument; *Abraham*, who is of all others the most excellent, is yet notwithstanding lesse than *Melchisedec*. *Melchisedec* then obtaines the chiefest honour, and ought to be preferred before all the Levites. The antecedent, that is to say, the first of these two propositions, is prooved, because *Abraham* paid that into *Melchisedec's* hand which he ought to God: he confessed then by paying of tithes, that he was lesse than *Melchisedec*.

That is of their brethren: It is more fitly turned thus, then Ver. 5. if

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if one should say, because they were of the number of children, or sonnes: for the Apostle reasons not, as though the Priests receiued the tithes, because they were of the number of the sonnes of Leui: but he makes a comparison of this whole tribe with *Melchisedec* on this manner; when God gaue power and authoritie to the Leuites to demand tithes of the people, therein God did appoint, and establish them aboue all the rest of the Israelites, although they were all begotten of one father. Now *Abraham*, who was the father of them all, did yet paie tithes to a Priest, which was a stranger: it followeth then, that all the successours of *Abraham* are inferiour to this Priest. Thus the right giuen to the Leuites, was particular aboue all the rest of their brethren: But *Melchisedec* is placed in an high degree aboue any of them, so as he holds them all vnderneath him. Some thinke the Apostle speakes of the tenths, which the Leuites paid to the cheife Priests, as Numb. 18. 26, 27, 28. But there is no reason why we should so restraints a generall speech. For that which I haue said is the most probable.

Ver. 6.

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And blessed him which had the promises.] This is the fifth point which the Apostle obserues in the comparison betweene Christ and *Melchisedec*. Now he takes a principle which is held as the most certain of all: to wit, that the lesse is blessed of the greater. He afterward addes, that *Melchisedec* blessed *Abraham*: whereof it followes, that *Abraham* is the lesser. But to the ende he might enlarge the matter, he againe adorns *Abraham* with an excellent title. For by how much the more excellent *Abraham* is, by so much the more is the dignitie of *Melchisedec* extolled. To this he hath respect when he saith, that *Abraham* receined the promises, wherein he signifies that *Abraham* is that excellent personage, and the first father of that holy nation, with which God made the couenant of eternall life. For it was no small honour vnto him, that he onely amongst all others should be chosen, as the man whom God betruisted with the right of adoption, and with the testimonie of his loue. Yet all this hindred not, but that he, with all these prerogatiues should submit

submit himselfe to the Priest *Melchisedec*. Thus we clearely see how great this *Melchisedec* was, to whome *Abraham* subiected himselfe in two things: first in that he suffered himselfe to be blessed of him; and secondly, in that he offered him tithes, as vnto him who did represent the person of God.

And without all contradiction, &c. In the first place we are to learne what this blessing here signifies. It is a solemne praier, by which he that is placed in any excellent degree of honour, and publike office, doth recommend persons, and those that are committed vnto his gouernment particularly vnto God. There is also another kinde of blessing; which is when we pray one for another: a thing common among all the faithfull. But this blessing whereof the Apostle here makes mention, is a signe of a farre greater power and authoritie. Thus *Isaack* blessed his sonne *Jacob*, and *Jacob* blessed *Ephraim* and *Manasses*, the sonnes of *Ioseph*. Gen. 27. 27. Gen. 48. 15. For this was not a mutuall acte, wherein the sonne may doe as much for the father: but to the ende this blessing might be duely and lawfully performed, it was required that he which did it should be a superiour, & should be in authoritie also aboue him whom hee blessed. Which is the better vnderstood by the 6. of *Nũbers*, 27. where commandement beeing giuen to the Priests to blesse the people, the promise is by and by added: to wit, that those whom they blessed, should be blessed of God. The blessing I say which the Priests pronounced was confirmed and ratified with such authoritie, that it was not so much the authoritie of men as the authoritie of God. For euen as in offering of sacrifices the Priest did represent the person of Christ, so also in blessing of the people he was but the minister and imbassadour of the high God. In this sense also is that blessing to be taken, whereof mention is made, Luk. 24. 50. where Christ after he had lead his Apostles out of Bethania, lifted vp his hands on high and blessed them. No doubt he tooke this gesture of lifting vp the hands from the high Priests, to the ende he might shewe himselfe to be he by whom

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Verf. 7.

whom God the Father bleſſeth vs. This bleſſing alſo is mentioned, Pſal. 116. 17. and 118. 1. Now let vs apply this ſentence to that which he handleth. Seeing the bleſſing of the Prielt is a worke of God, ſo it is alſo a witneſſe of preheminiencie, and of the excellent honour which God imparted vnto him. *Melchizedec* then tooke vnto himſelfe the higheſt degree in that he bleſſed *Abraham*. For he did it not at randon, but according to the right and authoritie of his Prieſtly function: it followes then that he is *Abrahams* ſuperiour. And yet with *Abraham* did God contract the covenant of ſaluation. To conclude then, euen this man although he were the moſt excellent of all others, yet he had one more excellent than he aboue him: to wit, *Melchizedec*.

Ver. 8.

Of whome it is witneſſed that he liueth.] As I haue already ſaid, he takes it as a prooſe that *Melchizedec* liueth, becauſe no mention is made of his death. True it is this hath no place in others, but there is great reaſon why it ſhould haue place in *Melchizedec*, becauſe he is the image and figure of Chriſt: for in as much as the queſtion is here of the ſpirituall kingdome of Chriſt, and of his Prieſthood; humane coniectures ought to haue no place: neither is it lawfull to knowe any more than that which the ſcriptures doe ſet before vs. Yet we are not to gather from hence, that this man who met *Abraham*, ſhould be yet liuing: as ſome haue fooliſhly imagined. For this is to be referred to the qualitie of the perſon which *Melchizedec* ſuſtained: to wit, in that he repreſented the perſon of the ſonne of God. Moreover the Apoſtle mindes to ſhew by theſe words, that the dignitie of *Melchizedecs* Prieſthood is perpetuall, whereas the Prieſthood of the Levites was but for a time. For thus he frames his argument, Thoſe to whom the law aſſignes tithes to be paid, are mortall men: in which is ſhewed that the right of that Prieſthood was once to be aboliſhed, in regard they ended their liues. But the ſcripture makes no mention at all of the death of *Melchizedec*, when it ſpeakes of the tithes that were paid vnto him: thus then he limits not the right of his

his Priesthood within any compass of time, but rather closely shews that it endures for ever. Now this he addes, to the end it might not seeme that the law which immediatly followed did derogate any thing from the first, as the custome in other things is. For otherwise some might haue replied that this right of Priesthood which *Melchisedec* enioyed, is now abolished, because God gaue another law by *Moses*, by which he transported it ouer to the *Leuites*. But the Apostle preuents this reply, when he saith that the tithes were payd to the *Leuites* for a time, because they liued not alwaies: but that *Melchisedec* kept the right for euer which God had once giuen him, because he was immortall.

And to say as the thing is, &c.] He proceeds on further, *Verf. 9.* saying, that *Leui* himselfe who was then in the loynes of *Abraham*, was not exempt from this subiection, because *Abraham* in paying of tithes, did subiect both himselfe, and his posteritie also to the Priesthood of *Melchisedec*. But an obiection may bee thus framed to the contrarie, that by the like reason *Iudab* also, of whose seede Christ was begotten, paid tithes. But this difficultie will be easily remoued, when wee shall consider two things, which amongst Christians ought to be out of question. For Christ is not simply reputed among the children of *Abraham*, as one amongst the rest, but by a speciall priuiledge is exempt from the common order. And that is it which himselfe saith, *Mat. 22. 42.* If he be the sonne of *Dauid*, how then doth *Dauid* call him Lord? Wee see now that this argument from *Leui* to Christ holds not. Moreouer, seeing *Melchisedec* is the figure of Christ, what reason is there that he should be set to fight (as you would say) against him? For this common principle is to bee held, That which is placed beneath, doth not oppose it selfe against the principall to which it is referred. Wherefore, seeing the figure is lesse than the truth, it cannot, neither ought it to bee opposite against it. For this combat ought to haue place among things of equalitie. Now the Apostle hath fully shewed by these five members, what comparison there is betweene Christ and *Melchisedec*. And hereby

Name, place,
perpetuitie,
tithes, and the
right of blef-
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hereby is refuted the brainficke speculation of those who seeke the principall similitude in the offering of Bread and Wine. We see that the Apostle examines all things here very carefully and curiously (as it were) one after another. He obserues the name of the man, the place of his kingdome, the perpetuitie of his life, the right of tithes, and the right of blessing. Surely these things were of lesse importance than the oblation. Shall wee say that the Spirit of God had forgotten himselfe, so as to stay in these lesse things, and to omit that which is the principall, and wherein the pith of the matter lay? And I doe the more wonder that so many of the ancient Doctors of the Church haue been so farre besotted with this opinion, as to stand disputing here about the oblation of the Bread & Wine. Thus they say; Christ is a Priest after the order of *Melchisedec*: but *Melchisedec* offered bread and wine, it followes then that the sacrifice of bread and wine belongs to the Priesthood of Christ. The Apostle will speake fully hereafter of the ancient sacrifices: but of this new sacrifice of bread and wine, wil he not speak a word. How is it then that the Doctors of the Church came to be of this opinion? Truly euen because one error drawes on another, for hauing forged a sacrifice of the Supper of Christ, hauing receiued no such commandement from him: & so when they had once corrupted the supper by adding a sacrifice vnto it, they then made what shift they could (now here, now there) to borrow some colours to patch vp their error withall.

The application of this oblation of bread and wine pleased them as a thing seeming fit for the purpose: and by and by after it was receiued; but without iudgement or discretion. For who will graunt that these personages had a more cleere sight than the Spirit of God? and yet notwithstanding if wee receiue that which they teach, the holie Ghost should be condemned of vnaduisednes, because he obserued not a thing of so great consequence, especially seeing he handles this matter of set purpose. By this I conclude, that the ancient Fathers did forge vnto themselves such a sacrifice

sacrifice as *Moses* neuer thought of. For hee saith not that *Melchisedec* offered bread and wine to God; but rather to *Abraham*, and his companie. For these are his very words: *And Melchisedec King of Shalem brought fourth bread and wine, and he was a Priest of the most high God. Therefore hee blessed him, &c.* Gen. 14. 18. This first fact which he recites was performed as he was a King, to wit, to feed such as were wearie in the way returning from the battaile. As touching the blessing it appertained to his office of Priesthood. And therefore if any mysterie were in this oblation, it was no otherwise fulfilled in Christ, than when he nourisheth vs whē we are hungrie and wearied with trauaile. Now the Papists deserue to be laughed at againe and againe, who after they haue denied that there is any more bread and wine in the Masse after consecration, doe yet notwithstanding come in chanting their song of the sacrifice of bread and wine.

11 If therefore perfection had been by the Priesthood of the *Leuits* (for vnder it the law was established to the people) what needed it furthermore, that another Priest should rise after the order of *Melchisedec*, and not to be called after the order of *Aaron*?

12 For if the Priesthood be changed, then of necessitie must there be a change of the law.

13 For he of whom these things are spoken, pertaineth to another tribe, whereof no man serued at the altar.

14 For it is euident that our Lord sprung out of *Judah*, concerning the which tribe *Moses* spake nothing touching the Priesthood.

IF then perfection &c.] The Apostle gathers from the same Ver. 11. testimonie, that the old Testament was abolished by the comming of Iesus Christ. Hitherto hee hath onely dealt with the person and office of the Priesthood. But because God had appointed the Priest to establish and confirme the law, it followes that if so bee the Priesthood be abolished, then the law must needs cease. To the end this may be the

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better vnderstood, this principle must bee held, that there is not any couenant whatsoeuer firme and stable betweene God and men, vnlesse it bee founded vpon the Priesthood. Therefore the Apostle saith, that the law was established to the ancient people vnder the Leuiticall Priesthood: thereby signifying that this Priesthood not only reigned during the time of the law, but was also ordained (as wee haue said) to confirme it. Therefore thus he frames his argument: If the gouernment of the Church had been perfect vnder the order of *Aaron*, what neede had there been to haue returned to an order diuers from it? for where there is perfection, there is no neede of change: it followes then that the gouernment of the law was not perfect, because it was necessarie that there should bee a new order (whereof *David* speakes) appointed.

(*For the people receined the law vnder it*) This parenthesis is interlaced, to the end wee might know that the law was annexed and conioyned to the Priesthood. The Apostle would prooue, that the last end in which they were to rest was not in the law of *Moses*. Which he doth by abolishing of the Priesthood on this manner; If the vertue of the ancient Priesthood had been such, as had been sufficient to confirme the law perfectly, God would neuer haue put in the stead thereof another new Priesthood diuers from the former. Now because some might doubt whether the abolishing of the law should follow the ending of the Priesthood, he saith that the law was not onely giuen vnder the Priesthood, but also was confirmed and established by it.

Verse 12.

For if the Priesthood be changed, &c.] Seeing the law and the Priesthood be things coioined together, therefore Christ is not onely created Priest, but Lawgiuer also: by meanes whereof the right of *Aaron* is not onely transported ouer to Christ, but *Moses* right also. The summe of all is, that the ministerie of *Moses* was no lesse temporarie than that of *Aarons*. It was therefore necessarie that both of them should be abolished by the comming of Christ, because the one could not stand without the other. By this word *law*,

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we vnderstand that which properly belonged to *Moses*. *In what sense the word law is to be taken.*
 For the law containes both the rule of good life, and the free couenant of saluation: wherein there are also here and there many excellent sentences to be found, by which we are instructed in the faith and the feare of God. Nothing of this is abolished by the comming of Christ, but that part only which was wrapped vp with the auncient Priesthood. For here the comparison is betweene Christ and *Moses*; & therefore whatsoeuer is common to both of them comes not into the account, but onely those things wherein one of them differs from another. Now this is common to them both, that they offer the mercie of God; that they giue the rules of an vpright and holy life; that they teach the pure seruice of God, that they exhort to faith, patience, and to all duties of pietie. But herein *Moses* was different from Christ, first in that he held the people vnder darke obseruations, & in an obscure knowledge; because the light of the Gospel was not then manifested: secondly, he set a tast of Christ before them in shadowes and externall figures, whilest the trueth of the promises were not yet discouered. And lastly, in applying himselfe to the capacite of the rude people, he gaue them things of no higher conceit, than very childish rudiments. Let vs remember then that by the word *law*, he here vnderstands that part of the ministrie, which *Moses* had as proper to himselfe, and separate from Christ. Which law depending vpon the Priesthood, that being abolished, the lawe also must cease. And Christ beeing ordained Priest, receiues also therewithall the authoritie of lawgiuer, so as he is the minister and Mediatour of the newe testament. Now although the name of the law be improperly giuen to the gospel; yet so far is it off, that in this impropriety there should be any absurditie, that it rather graceeth the speech because of the Antithesis; as in the 7. to the Romans.

But here the Pope shewes himselfe to be too impudent, who hath this article inregistred in his Decretales, that he hath now the same authoritie and power that *Aaron* had in

the old time, because the Priesthood and the law was set over to him. Well, we see the Apostles drift. He contends to proove that the ceremonies ceased, seeing Christ is come with commandement to publish the new covenant. How can any thing be gathered from hence, that somewhat should be transported over to the ministers of Christ? for the onely person of Christ is opposed to *Moses* and *Aaron*. By what title then I pray you, dare the Romane Antichrist attribute vnto himselfe any authoritie? Truly it is not my purpose to stand to refute so sottish an impudencie; but it were very needfull to make this his pride (so full of sacriledge) knowne vnto the readers, to the ende they might be able cleerely to see and acknowledge how this good seruant of the seruants of Christ, cares not very much for the honour that is due to the master, and how like a beast he rentes the scriptures in pieces, to colour and cloke his tyranny withal.

Verf. 13.

For he of Whome these things are spoken, &c. Because the Apostle directs his speech to such as confessed Iesus the son of *Marie* to be the Christ; he prooves that an end is put to the olde Priesthood, in regard this newe Priest who is placed in the roome thereof, is of another tribe than that of *Leui*. For according to the law, the dignitie of the Priesthood was by a speciall priuiledge to continue in the tribe of *Leui*. Now he saith further, that *it is euident that Christ sprung out of Iudab*, because this was then commoly known: notwithstanding the principall assurance was grounded vpon the promise. Seeing then that they did acknowledge him to be Christ, it was also necessarie that they should be perswaded that he was the sonne of *Dauid*. For he which was promised could not descend of another tribe.

Ver. 14.

15 And it is yet a more euident thing, because that after the similitude of *Melchisedec*, there is risen up another Priest,

16 Which is not made Priest after the law of the carnall commandement, but after the power of the endlesse life.

Psal. 110. 4.

17 For he testifieth thus, thou art a Priest for ever after the order of *Melchisedec*.

18 For the commandement that went afore, is disauiled, because.

because of the weakenesse thereof, and unprofitablenesse.

19 For the law made nothing perfect but the bringing in of a better hope made perfect, whereby we draw neere unto God.

20 And for as much as it is not without an oath (for these are made Priests without an oath:

21 But this is made with an oath by him that said unto *Psal. 110. 4.* him, The Lord hath sworne, and will not repent, thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec.)

22 By so much the more is Iesus made a suretie of a better Testament.

ANd it is yet a more euident thing, &c.] He prooues by *Vcl. 15.* another argument that the law is abolished. He reasoned heretofore from the person of the Priesthood: now from the nature of the Priesthood, and from the reason, for which it was instituted. The old Priesthood, saith he, was instituted consisting of outward ceremonies: but in the Priesthood of Christ, there is nothing but that which is Spirituall. It appears then that the old was temporarie and transitorie: but it is manifest that this Priesthood of Christ is perpetuall. The carnall commandment is taken for the bodily ceremonies, that is to say, outward. We know with what solemne obseruations both *Aaron* and his children were ordained Priests. Now that which was fulfilled in Christ by a secret and heauenly power of the holy Ghost, was figured in the institution of *Aaron*, by oyle, by diuers garmets, by sprinkling with blood, and other earthly ceremonies. Now this kind of obseruation in ordaining the Priesthood was agreeable to the nature of that Priesthood. Whereof it followed that euen the Priesthood it selfe was subiect to change. Although (as we shall see afterwards) the Priesthood was not so carnal, that it was not also spirituall: But the Apostle hath respect onely to that difference which was between Christ and *Aaron*. So then howsoeuer the signification of the shadowes was spirituall, notwithstanding the shadowes themselves are rightly tearmed *earthly*, because they consisted of the elements of this world.

Verse 16.

But after the power of the endlesse life.] Because Christ is a perpetuall Priest, it was very requisite that he should differ from *Aaron* as touching the manner of his ordination and institution. Which was so, for he was not consecrated by *Moses*, a mortall man; but by the holy Ghost: and not with oyle, nor with the blood of goates, nor with outward garments, but with an heauenly power, the which the Apostle here opposeth to the weake and rude elements. We see then how the Priesthood hath beene declared to be perpetuall in Christ.

Vers. 17.

Thou art a Priest for euer.] The Apostle doth here onely stay himselfe vpon this word of *perpetuitie*, or *eternitie*. For he confirms that which he had said of *the endlesse life*. He shewes then that Christ differs from all the tribe of *Leui*: because he is ordained an eternall Priest. But here the Iewes make an obiection: to wit, that the Hebrew word *laholam* doth not alwaies signifie eternitie, but rather the space of an age, or of a very long time. Also that *Moses* speaking of the sacrifices vnder the law, doth often vse this manner of speech, This shall be an ordinance for euer: which manner of speech from the Hebrew tongue is translated *perpetually*. I answer, that as often as mention is made of the sacrifices of the law, this word *euer*, is restrained to the time of the law. Neither are we to thinke that there is any absurditie in this exposition. For the world was as it were renewed againe by the comming of Christ. As often then as *Moses* speakes of the estate of his ministrie, he vnderstands it not of any further time than till the comming of Christ. Although here withall we may also obserue, that the lasting for euer, is attributed to the old sacrifices, not in regard of the outward ceremonies, but of the mysticall and hidden signification. Notwithstanding for the present, we ought to content our selues with this reason; to wit, that *Moses* and his ministrie had his *euer*, to which the kingdome of Christ did put an end: vnder which the world was renewed.

Answer.

But now Christ beeing risen vp, and the eternall Priesthood beeing giuen him, we shall finde none end of this e-

ner, that it should be limited to any certaine space of time. *How farre this*
 So we are not to vnderstand any thing by this word *euery* in word *euery* is to
 this place; but an eternitie and a perpetuall continuance *be extended.*

For when we will rightly knowe the meaning of this word
laholam, we must alwaies consider the circumstance of the
 speech, and by that iudge of the meaning.

19 For the commandment that went before is abolished. Ver. 19.

¶ Because the Apostle is now vpon this fundamentall &
 principall point of his speech, to wit, that the law with the
 Priesthood thereof is disannulled, he here shewes the cause
 why it was to be abolished: euen because it was *weake, and*
unprofitable: which he speakes onely in regard of the cere-
 monies, which had no stabilitie in them; and of themselues
 serued nothing at all vnto saluation. For although the pro-
 mise of grace, which *Moses* euery where specifieth was
 annexed vnto them: to wit, that God was to be appeased
 by the sacrifices; this did not properly agree vnto the sacri-
 fices, but proceeded from another cause. For as the figures *All the figures*
 were all referred vnto Christ, so of him they borrowed *under the law*
 all their strength and efficacie: nay they had no power in them, *borrowed their*
 neither did they either good or hurt of themselues; but all *efficacie from*
 their vertue depended vpon Christ alone. Now because the *Christ.*
 Iewes did not rightly vnderstand this, but opposed them
 vnto Christ, therefore the Apostle fitting his speech accord-
 ing to that opinion which they had of them, doth now
 make a separation between them and Christ. Now as soone
 as they are separate from him, nothing at all remaines in
 them but that *weaknesse* whereof he here speakes. In a word,
 a man shall finde no profit in the auncient ceremonies, till
 he come vnto Christ: yea they so gaue the Iews assurance of
 the grace of God, that in the meane while they did but hold
 them as it were in suspence. Let vs remember then that the
 law is called *unprofitable*, when it is separate from Christ.
 This also serueth to confirme this doctrine: in that he cal-
 leth it the former commandment, for this is a principle
 both common, and well known; to wit, that the first lawes
 and ordinances are abolished by the latter. The law was

published a long time before *David*: hee was then in his kingdome when he pronounced this prophecie of the creating of a newe Priest. This is then a new law which disanul-
leth the former.

Ver. 19.

For the lawe made nothing perfect, &c.] Because he had spoken somewhat harshly of the law, he now sweetens this sharpnes, & corrects it, as it were. For he graunts some profit to be in it, that is, that it shewed the way, by which men might come to the end of their saluation. Yet notwithstanding euen that was farre off from perfection. Thus the Apostle reasons then, The law gaue but an entrance: therefore it was needful that some thing of more perfection should succeed and come after. For the children of God are not alwaies to stay theselues in the rudiments of children. By this word of *bringing in*, he meanes that there was somewhat in the law in regard of a preparation, euen as children haue little beginnings giuen them, to prepare them thereby afterwards to attaine to an higher knowledge: but because the particle *Epi* whereof the Greeke word is composed, signifies a following, when one thing succedes another; I haue thought good to translate, *But is come in*, or was added. For in mine opinion he puts two introductions: the first in the figure of *Melchisedec*: the second in the law, which is last in regard of time. Now by this word *law*, he meanes the Leuiticall Priesthood, which came in after the Priesthood of *Melchisedec*. By a *better hope* he meanes, the state of the faithfull vnder the kingdome of Christ. And withall he hath some respect to those of the Fathers, who not contenting themselues with their present estate, aspired to one further off. And thereof it comes, that Christ said, Many kings and prophets haue desired to see the things which yee see, Luk. 10.24. Wherefore the law as a schoolemaster lead them by the hand, pointing out a further thing vnto them.

By which we drawe nere to God.] Here is a close antithesis between vs and the fathers. For herein we are promoted to a more excellent dignity than they, because God now communicates himselfe familiarly vnto vs, whereas he only appeared

peared to them darkly and a farre off. And this is an alluding to the forme of the Tabernacle, or of the Temple. For the people remained farre off in the court, and none approched neere vnto the Sanctuarie but the Priests: and as touching the inward Sanctuarie, none entred therein but the high Priest. But since the Tabernacle is taken away, God doth familiarly manifest himselfe vnto vs: which he did not to the Fathers. He then who yet holds, or any way prefers the shadowes of the law; he not only thereby darkens the glorie of Christ, but also deprives vs of a singular benefit: because as much as in him is, he placeth a wall of separation againe betweene God and vs: to the approching towards which bountie and liberalitie the way is now made plaine for vs by the Gospell. Whosoever therefore yet sticketh in these ceremonies, hee wittingly deprives himselfe of this great benefit of drawing neere to God.

Was not without an oth.] This is an argument shewing why the Law is to giue place to the Gospell, to wit, because God preferred the Priesthood of Christ before *Aarons*: so that for the honour thereof hee was content to confirme it with an oth. For when he ordained the Priests in old time, he vsed no oth: but as touching Christ, it is said, *the Lord hath sworn*: which doubtles was done to the end his Priesthood should be adorned; and also to shew the excellencie thereof. We see the reason why he alleageth the Psalme once againe: to wit, to the end we should know that in regard of Gods oth, more dignitie is attributed to the Priesthood of Christ, than to any other. Now we are to remember this principle again, that the Priest is created to be a suretie of the couenant. And for this cause the Apostle cōcludes, that the couenant which God made with vs by the hand of Christ, is much more excellent than the old couenant, whereof *Moses* was the Mediatour.

23 *And among them many were made Priests, because they were not suffered to endure, by reason of death.*

24 *But this man, because he endureth ever, hath a Priesthood.*

hood which cannot passe from one to another.

25 Wherefore he is able perfectly also to saue them that come vnto God by him, seeing he euery lueth, to make intercession for them.

26 For such an high Priest it became vs to haue, which is holy, harmeles, vndefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heauens:

27 Which needeth not daily as those high Priests to offer vp sacrifice, first for his owne sinnes, and then for the peoples: for that he did once, when he offered vp himselfe.

28 For the law maketh men high Priests, which haue infirmitie: but the word of the oth that was since the law, maketh the sonne who is consecrated for euermore.

Ver. 23.

And amongst them many were made Priests, &c.] He touched this comparison by the way heretofore: but because the matter required to be further weighed, and better considered of, he now declares it more fully. Although the sense of his disputation is otherwise than before. For heretofore he gathered that the old Priesthood ought to end, because mortall men were ordained to exercise the same: and now he simply shewes why Christ continues an euerlasting high Priest. The which he doth by an argument called *A disparatis. The reason why the Priests in old time were many, was, because death put an end to their Priesthood: but there is no death which hinders Christ from exercising his office. He then is the alone and perpetuall high Priest. Thus the diuersitie of the cause makes diuers effects.

*It is when things are separated one from another by a negative, as here to dye, and not to dye.

Ver. 25.

Wherefore he is able also perfectly &c.] This is the fruite of the eternall Priesthood, to wit, our saluation: provided that we gather this fruite by faith as we ought. For in vaine shall a man seeke saluation where there is either death, or mutabilitie: and therefore those who rest in the old and ancient Priesthood, shall neuer come to saluation. When he saith, those that come to God, by this he signifies the faithfull, who doe onely enioy the saluation obtained by Christ. In the meane while he shewes what it is that faith ought to behold in

in Christ the Mediatour. For it is the chiefe happines of man to be knit vnto his God, who is the wellspring of life, and of all felicitie: but all of vs are shut out from hauing accessse vnto him by our owne vnworthines. Therefore the proper office of the Mediatour is to succour vs in this regard; to reach vs his hand, to bring vs into heauen. Now he alwaies alludes to the olde shadowes vnder the Law. For although the high Priest had the names of the twelue tribes vpon his shoulders, and that hee bare also the signes thereof continually vpon his heart, Exod. 28. 12. 29. yet he entred himself alone into the Sanctuarie, whereas the people tarried without in the court. But resting now vpon Christ, and hauing him our Mediatour, we enter by faith euen into heauen: because there is no vaile to hinder vs, but God with open face doth appeare vnto vs, and with an amiable countenance calles vs to come boldly and familiarly vnto him.

*No vaile lets
vs from ap-
proching vnto
God now, if we
beleue in
Christ.*

Seeing he euer liueth, &c.] Can wee sufficiently esteeme this pledge of Gods loue toward vs, that Christ now liues rather for vs, than for himselfe? He was receiued into eternall blessednes, that he might reigne in heauen: but the Apostle preacheth that it was for vs. Wherefore both the life, the kingdome, and the glorie of Christ are appointed to our saluation, as to their proper end: and Christ hath nothing which wee may not bee bold to applie to our commoditie: because he was once giuen vs of the Father vpon this condition, that all he hath should be made ours. Now the Apostle also immediatly shewes by the effect that Christ performes this office of Priesthood, because the proper office of a Priest is to make intercession for the people, that he might obtaine fauour of God for them. Christ doth this alwaies, because he is risen againe from death for this end. Therefore he iustly attributes vnto him the name of a Priest, because of his office of intercession.

*Christ with all
that he hath, is
ours.*

For it became vs to haue such an high Priest, &c.] He now frames his argument which wee call Ab annexis, that is to say, by things ioyned together. These qualities or conditions of being *iust, innocent, and without spot*, are necessarily required

Verſ. 26.

required to be in a Priest. Now this honour agrees to none but to Christ. It followes then that that which was required to be in the Priests vnder the Law for the right exercising of their function, was wanting in them. We may therefore conclude that there was no perfection in the Leuiticall Priesthood: and that of it selfe it was vnlawful, further than it was seruiceable vnto Christ, and was a figure or representation of him. For euen the very outward ornaments of the high Priest shewed this imperfection: otherwise to what end serued so rich and costly garments, wherewith God caused *Aaron* to be adorned when he was to performe the diuine-seruice; were they not signes of an angelicall holinesse and excellencie, farre exceeding all humane vertues? Now these signes were applied vnto him, because the substance was not present there in effect. It appeares then that there was no other sufficient Priest but Christ.

Separate from sinners.] This member comprehends all the rest. For there was some holines, some innocencie, and puritie in *Aaron*; but onely in a small measure. For al these vertues were blemished with many spots in him. But Christ which is exempt out of the common order of sinfull men, is onely and alone free from sinne. And therefore there is none other in whom we can finde true holines and perfect innocencie. For in that it is said he is *separate from vs*, it is not, as if he would shut vs out from hauing communion with him; but because this excellencie is proper to him aboue vs, that he is voide of all impuritie. Now we may gather herehence, that all those prayers which depend not vpon the intercession of Christ, are reiected. But a question may be made, whether the Angels also bee separate from sinners. And if they be, what should hinder them from exercising the office of the Priest, or that they should not be our mediators for vs to God? The answer is easie: for there is no lawful Priest valesse he be ordained of God. Now there is no place that shewes where God hath done the Angels this honour. And therefore it should bee an vsurpation full of sacriledge in them, if they should intrude into this office, not being called there-

*All prayers
that depend
not vpo Christs
intercession are
reiected.
Question.*

Answer.

*Angels no law-
full mediators,
and why.*

thereunto. Moreouer (as we shall see in the beginning of the chapter following) he must be a *man* that must be a Mediatour between God and man. Although the last condition which the Apostle here recites (to wit, *made higher then the heauens*) were onely sufficient of it selfe to resolue this questiō. For none can knit vs to god, but hee which attaineth vnto God. Now this is not given to the Angels themselves: for it is not said of them that *they are made higher then the heauens*. Wherefore it belongs to none but to Christ to reconcile vs to God, seeing there is none but he that is ascended far aboue all heauens. Now this manner of speech is as much as if he had said, that Christ is exalted aboue all the orders of creatures: so as he is placed aboue the Angels.

Eph. 4.10.

Which needeth not daily, &c. He followes the antithesis betweene Christ and the Leviticall Priests, noting two speciall wants in them, whereby it appeares that the old Priesthood was not fully perfect. In this place he toucheth but the samme briefly: but hereafter he will expound all the particulars at large: but one of the principall defects was, that they daily renewed their sacrifices; and indeed this was the chiefe thing in question. For mine own part, I will also shortly, and briefly touch euery point. Was it not a defect that the high Priest was faine to offer sacrifice, first for his owne sinnes? for how could such a one appease God for others, whose wrath and indignation did worthily threaten himselfe? This is one reason then, why the auncient Priests were not sufficient to doe away sinnes. The other defect was, that they euery day offered diuers sacrifices: whereby it appeared that there was no sufficient purgation: because the purgation being reiterated, the sinnes and offences remained. Now it is otherwise in Christ. For he hath no neede to sacrifice for himselfe, because he is not tainted with any spot of sin: & his sacrifice was such, that the only offering of it, is sufficient to the end of the world: for he offered himselfe.

Verf. 17.

1

2

Christ's sacrifice absolutely perfect.

For the law maketh men high Priests.] He gathers by the

Verf. 13.

vices.

vices of men, how weake the Priesthood was, as if he should say, seeing the law ordaines not true Priests indeed; it must needs follow of necessitie that this defect must be amended by somewhat else. Now it is corrected by the word of the oath. For Christ is not ordained as a common man, but as he is the sonne of God, not subiect to any infirmitie, but decked and adorned, with an high and soueraigne perfection. He addes further that the oath is *after the law*, to shewe that God not contenting himselfe with the Priesthood of the law, was minded to ordaine and establish something that should be better. For in the ordinances and statutes of God, that which comes after, turnes the things that were before into a better estate; or els abolisheth viterly those things which had a place onely for a time.

CHAP. VIII.

- 1 Now of the things which we haue spoken, this is the summe, that we haue such an high Priest, that sitteth at the right hand of the throne of maiestie in heauens,
- 2 And is a minister of the Sanctuarie, and of the true Tabernacle which the Lord pitcht, and not man.
- 3 For euery high Priest is ordained to offer both gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it was of necessitie that this man should haue somewhat also to offer.
- 4 For he were not a Priest, if he were on the earth, seeing there are Priests that according to the law offer gifts:
- 5 Who serue vnto the patterne and shadow of heauenly things, as Moses was warned by God when he was about to finish the Tabernacle. See said he, that thou make all things according to the patterne shewed thee in the Mount.
- 6 But now our high Priest hath obtained a more excellent office, in as much as he is the Mediator of a better Testament which is established vpon better promises.

Now

NOW the summe of that we haue spoken, &c.] To the ende the readers might know what the matter is, which he now handleth, he shewes it is his intent to proue that the Priesthood of Christ is spirituall, by which the Priesthood of the law was abolished. True it is, that he alwaies holds on his purpose: but because he contends with diuers arguments, he interlaced this admonition, that hee might alwaies keepe the readers attentiuo to the ende and scope of his speech. He hath heretofore proued Christ to be the high Priest: now he strues to proue further that his Priesthood is heavenly, wherby it follows, that by his coming, that which Moses instituted vnder the law is abolished, in regard it was earthly. Now because Christ suffered in the baseness of the flesh, and by taking vpon himselfe the forme of a seruant, made himselfe of no reputation in the world, Philip. 2. 7. The Apostle sends vs to his ascension, by which not only the shame of the crosse was swallowed vp, but also that base and abiect condition which he had by cloathing himselfe with our flesh. For we must esteeme of the dignitie of Christ his Priesthood, by the vertue of the holy Spirit, which was manifested in his resurrection, and ascension. Thus then stands his argument, Seeing Christ is ascended to the right hand of God, to raigne triumphantly in heauen, he is not a minister of the earthly sanctuarie, but of the heavenly.

As touching this word of *holy things*, or of the sanctuary, the Apostle expounds himselfe when he addes, *of the true Tabernacle*. But some may aske here, whether it was a false Tabernacle which Moses built, or made at randon? For in these wordes there is a close opposition. I answer, that this truth whereof he speaks, is not opposite to a lie; but to the figures onely: as also when it is said, Ioh. 1. 17. The law was giuen by Moses, but grace and truth came by Iesus Christ. This auncient Tabernacle then was no vaine inuention of man, but the image of the heavenly Tabernacle. Notwithstanding because there is difference betweene the shadow and the bodie; also between the signification, and the thing signified;

Objection.

Answer.

Verf. 2.
Objection.

Answer.

Verf. 3.

signified; the Apostle saith that it was not a true Tabernacle; as if hee should say, it was a Tabernacle, but yet onely in figure and shadow.

Which the Lord picketh out not man.] Some man may say, What meanes the Apostle thus to place the Priesthood of Christ in heauen? Did hee not endure death in this world; and by his bloodshed therein washed away our sins? Tooke he not his beginning from the seede of *Abraham*; was not his sacrifice visible; and to the end he might offer vp himself to God, did hee not descend into the earth, and was made man subiect to the miseries of this mortall life, and in the end to death it selfe? I answer, whatsoever appeared earthly in Christ at the first blushe ought to be spiritually considered of vs with the eyes of faith. So that euen his flesh which he tooke of the seede of *Abraham*, was of a quickning power, because it was the temple of God: yea the very death of Christ was the life of the world, which surely is a thing farre aboue nature. So then the Apostle respects not so much the proprietie of the humane nature, as hee doth the secret vertue of the holy Spirit, which is the cause that the death of Christ saouours nothing at all of that which is earthly. Wherefore when we speake of Christ, let vs learne to lift vp our senses into the kingdome of God: and so al scruples shall be taken away. *S. Paul* speakes almost after this manner, 2. Cor. 5. He calles God *the builder of this Tabernacle*, to shew that the estate thereof shall be stable and perpetuall: as on the contrarie, the things which are buik by the hands of men are earthly, or at the least subiect to ruine. Now the cause why the Apostle speakes thus in this present place, is, in regard the redemption obtained by the death of Christ, was a worke truly diuine; and because therein the power of Christ shewed it selfe after an admirable manner.

For euery high Priest is ordained, &c.] The Apostles drift is to shew, that the Priesthood of Christ cannot stand with the olde Leuiticall Priesthood. To prooue it, he saith, that God appointed the Priests to offer him sacrifices: which being so, the title of Priest should be vnprofitable without a sacrifice.

sacrifice. Now Christ hath no such sacrifice or burnt offering as they were accustomed to haue vnder the law: thereof it followes that his Priesthood was not earthly or carnall, but of a more excellent fashion. Let vs now examine the sentences one after another. This first is very well worth the marking, which shewes that no Priest is ordained but to offer *gifts* and *sacrifices*. For thereby it appeares that men cannot obtaine fauour of God, vnlesse there be a sacrifice. Therefore our prayers ought to bee founded vpon some sacrifice before they can be heard; so that it is a pernicious and deadly ouerweening in men, who presume to present themselves before the maiestie of God without Iesus Christ, casting aside the remembrance of his death and passion. But as touching our selues, if so be we meane to pray with fruite, let vs alwaies learne to place Christ his death in the midst, to the end our prayers may be sanctified thereby. For God will neuer heare vs if he fauour vs not. Now therefore it is needfull first of all that he be appeased towards vs, because our sinnes doe procure his displeasure: a *sacrifice* therefore of necessitie must goe before, that wee may profit something by our prayers, and may feele the fruite. Wee ought also to gather from hence, that there is no man, Saint, or Angell whatsoeuer which is sufficient to appease God, because all, be they neuer so many, haue no sacrifice fit for them, which they can offer to pacifie him. Hereby then the impudencie of the Papists is sufficiently beaten backe, who make the Apostles and Martyrs mediators of intercession as well as Christ, without any difference. For it is in vaine that they take vnto themselves this office, if soorthwith they doe not furnish themselves with sacrifices and gifts to offer.

*How to pray
with fruite.*

*No Saint, or
Angell, fit to
be mediators
betweene God
and vs: because
they want a
sacrifice.*

For he were not a Priest, &c.] This is alreadie put out of doubt, that Christ is the great high Priest. Now as the office of a Iudge cannot stand without lawes and iudgements, so must the office of sacrificing be ioyned with the title of the Priesthood in Christ. But hee hath no earthly, or visible sacrifice: therefore he cannot be an earthly Priest. Wee must alwaies keepe this principle in mind, that when the Apostle

Ver. 4.

Two things to
be considered
in Christs
death.

speakes of the death of Christ, he respects not the outward act so much, as the spiritual fruite that came thereof. He suffered death after the common manner of men; but in that he blotted out sins as a Priest, this was by a diuine power. The shedding of his blood was a thing outward: but the purgation it wrought and yet worketh is a thing inward and spirituall. In a word, hee died on earth, but the power and efficacie of his death reached to heauen. As touching that which followeth, some turne it thus; Of the number of those which offer gifts according to the law, &c. But the words of the Apostle haue another signification: therefore I had rather resolue it thus; Whilst there are, or seeing there are Priests. For his meaning is to prooue one of the two, either that Christ is not a Priest, if so be the Priesthood of the law remaine, because it is without sacrifice: or rather that the sacrifices of the law doe take an end as soone as Christ shewes himselfe. But the first member is absurd, because it is not lawfull to spoyle Christ of his Priesthood. It remains then that we confesse the order of the Leuiticall Priesthood to be now abolished.

Ycl. 5.

Who serue vnto the paterne, &c.] I take this word *to serue*, in this place, for the performance of the diuine seruice: and therefore this word *vnto*, must be vnderstood in the Greeke text, or els some other word like vnto it which also we haue put, to wit, *in the*. Truly this sense agrees better; than as others turne it, Which serue to the paterne, and shadow of heavenly things: and the construction of the Greeke text doth easily beare this sense. To be short, he teacheth that the true seruice of God consists not in the legall ceremonies: and therefore when as the Leuiticall Priests executed their office, they had onely a shadow, and an inferiour pourtrature, which is farre beneath the true and naturall paterne. For indeede the Greeke word which we translate *paterne*, or samplar, signifies so much. So that he preuents an obiection which might be made to the contrarie. For he shewes y^e the seruice of God after the custom of y^e fathers, was not vnprofitable; because it had an higher significatiō, to wit, heavenly.

As it was answered to Moses when he was to finish the Tabernacle.] This place is in Exod. 20. 40. And the Apostle alleageth it to proue that the seruice of the law was but as a picture, to shadow forth that which was spirituall in Christ. God commands that all the parts of the Tabernacle should be answerable to the chiefe paterne, which was shewed vnto *Moses* in the mountaine. But if so be the forme of the Tabernacle had a further end than that which was seene with the eye; as much then is to be said of the ceremonies, and of all the Priesthood. From whence it followes, that there was no stabilitie in any of all these things, but that we must still come vnto that which was shadowed out by them. Behold an excellent place, because it containes in it three sentences worthie to be noted. For first wee learne by this that the ceremonies of old were not forged by mans braine, neither did God meane to exercise his people therein as in sports fit for little children: the Tabernacle also was not built in vaine, as if it serued to no other purpose but only to draw the eyes of the beholders to gaze vpon the outward magnificence of it, as if they were to stay in that. For the signification of all these things were true and spiritual, because *Moses* was commanded to frame them all according to the first paterne, which was heauenly. Therefore their opinion is too prophane which say, that the ceremonies were onely commanded to serue as a bridle for staying the inconstancie of the people, least they should haue gone to seeke out strange ceremonies among the Gentiles. This indeede is something which they say, but not all. For they leaue out that which is of much more importance: to wit, that they were exercises to hold the people in the faith of the Mediatour. Yet notwithstanding it is not needfull that we should be ouer curious, so as to seeke out some high or profound mysterie in euery pinne, and in euery small piece of the Tabernacle, as *Hesichius*, and the greater part of the ancient authors, who haue trauailed too curiously in this behalfe: for whilest they goe about subtilly to diuine in things to them vnknowne, they haue failed very blockishly, and she-

wed themselves ridiculous bablers. So then we must keepe a meane herein: which wee shall doe when wee desire to know no more than that which is reuealed to vs in Christ.

2

Secondly, we are here taught, that all seruices which men haue forged after their owne minde, and without the commandement of God are false and corrupt. For seeing God commands that all things should be framed according to the rule and paterne: it is not lawfull to make any thing els, or contrarie vnto it. For these two manners of speech (*See that thou make all things according to the paterne*: and, *Take heede thou make nothing more than the paterne*) are in weight one, as much as the other. Wherefore, in requiring straightly that we keepe the rule which he hath giuen vs, he therewithall forbids vs to turne aside an haire breadth from it. By this meanes all seruices deuised by men fall flat to the ground, and those which some call Sacraments, which notwithstanding were neuer ordained of God.

*We must not
goe an haire
breadth from
Gods com-
mandement, in
things pertai-
ning to his wor-
ship.*

3

Thirdly, we may learne from hence that there are no true signes and Sacraments in religion, but those which are referred to Christ. But we are withall to take great heede that whilest we endeavour to appropriate and to make our inuentions to agree to Christ, that we doe not transfigure him as the Papists doe, that hee should bee no more like himselfe. For we haue no authoritie to inuent what wee thinke to be good, but it only belongs to God to shew what we ought to doe. For it is said, *according to the paterne* which he shewed thee.

Ver. 6.

But now *our high Priest, &c.*] Euen as heretofore he gathered the excellencie of the covenant by the dignitie of the Priesthood, so now also he maintaines, that the Priesthood of Christ is more excellent; because he is the Mediatour and Ambassadour of a better covenant. Both the one and the other were necessarie, because it was needfull that the Iewes should be turned from the superstitious obseruation of ceremonies, which were so many impediments to hinder them from going directly to the pure and simple truth of the Gospell. Now the Apostle saith that it was rea-
son

son that both *Moses* and *Aaron* should giue place to *Christ*, as to the more excellent: because the Gospel is a more excellent couenant than the law, and the death of *Christ* much more noble than the sacrifices of the law. But that which he addes is not without some difficultie; to wit, that the couenant of the Gospel was established vpon better promises. For it is certaine, that euen the very same hope of eternall life which we now haue, was set before the auncient Fathers which liued vnder the law. The grace of adoption beeing as common to them as to vs. Their faith then must needs be built vpon the same promises. But this comparison of the Apostle must be rather referred to the forme than to the matter. For although God did promise them the same saluation, which he promiseth vs now at this day, yet notwithstanding the measure, or manner of reuelation was neither equall, nor alike. But if any wil see more of this, let him haue recourse to our Institution, and to that which is written vpon the fourth and fith chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians.

Obiection.

Answer.

7 For if that first Testament had been unblameable, no place should haue beene sought for the second.

8 For in rebuking them he saith, Behold the daies will come, saith the Lord, when I shall make with the house of Israel, and with the house of Iudah a new Testament.

Ier. 32.31.32.
33.34.

Rom. 11.27.

Chap. 10.16.

9 Not like the Testament that I made with their fathers, in the day that I tooke them by the hand, to lead them out of the land of Egypt: for they continued not in my Testament, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

10 For this is the Testament that I will make with the house of Israel, After those daies saith the Lord, I will put my lawes in their minds, and in their heart I will write them, and I will bee their God, and they shall be my people.

11 And they shall not teach euery man his neighbour, and euery man his brother saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them.

12 And I will be mercifull vnto their unrighteousnesse,

and

The 12. verse is
expounded af-
ter verse 10.

and I will remember their finnes and their iniquities no more.
13 In that he saith a new Testament, he hath abrogated the
old: now that which is disannulled and waxed old, is ready to va-
nish away.

Verf. 7.

Obiection.

For if the first Testament, &c.] He confirms that which
he said touching the excellencie of the covenant which
god hath made with vs by the hand of Christ. Now his con-
firmation stands vpon this, that the covenant or testament
of the law was not stable. For if it had beene perfect, what
need had there beene that another should be put in the
place thereof? But we see that there is another. It appears
then, that this auncient covenant was not perfect in all
points. Now to prooue this he alleadgeth the testimonie of
Jeremiah, the which we will intreat of by and by. But it may
seeme that this agrees not very well, that he should affirme
that there had bin no necessitie to seek a place for a second
covenant, if so be the first had beene *unblameable*: and that
he addes withall, that the people are reprooued, so as for
their default a remedie was giuen by the new covenant. And
is it not a wicked thing to affirme, that for the sinne of the
people, the fault should therefore be cast vpon the coue-
nant of God? It seemes then that the argument is vnfound.
For although God should condemne the people an hun-
dred times, yet are we not to conclude that the covenant
should therefore be faultie. But this obiection is easily an-
swered. For although the fault of breaking the covenant be
iustly imputed to the people, who by their disloyaltie tur-
ned away from the Lord: yet notwithstanding the weaknes
of this covenant by this meanes is therewithall touched: to
wit, because it was not *written in their hearts*. Wherefore god
protesteth that the heart must be corrected, before it can be
holy, and confirmed. The Apostle therefore hath iust cause
to affirme, that a new covenant was to be established.

Answer.

Verf. 8.

Behold the daies come, &c.] The Prophet speakes of the
time to come. He reprooues the people for their disloyalty,
that hauing receiued the law, they did not perseuere in the
faith.

saith. The law then is this couenant which God complaines the people brake. And to remedie this euill, he promisseth a newe couenant; not like the first: the fulfilling of which prophetic imports the abolishing of the old Testament. But it seemes the Apostle doth misalleage this prophetic to make it serue his purpose. For here the question is about the abrogation of ceremonies; and the Prophet speaks of the whole lawe. For let it be granted that God doth write the rule of holines of life in the hearts, which yet is given by the voice of men, and by them put into writing, what is all this to the purpose in regard of ceremonies? I answer, it is an argument from the whole to a part. For we are not to doubt but the Prophet comprehends the whole ministrie of *Moses*, when he saith, I haue made a couenant with you, which couenant you brake. The law indeed was clothed as it were, with ceremonies: but now the bodie being destroyed and dead, what vse is there of the garments? for it is a common prouerbe well enough knowne, that the appurtenance or accessarie is of the nature of his principall. It is no maruell then, if the ceremonies which are but hangbies (as you would say) of the old testament, with the whole ministrie of *Moses* be abolished. And it is alwaies the vsuall custome of the Apostles, when they contend about ceremonies, to dispute generally of the whole law. So then, although this prophetic of *Jeremiah* stretcheth it selfe further than to the ceremonies, yet notwithstanding because they are included vnder the name of the old Testament, the Apostle fitly applies this prophetic to his present purpose. Moreouer, all doe confesse, that by the *daies* whereof the Prophet makes mention, is signified the kingdome of Christ. He names *the house of Israel*, and *the house of Iudab*, because the posteritie of *Abraham* was deuided into two kingdomes: therefore it is a promise that the whole bodie of all the elect shall be gathered againe together in one: howsoeuer in times past they were seuered.

Obiection.

Answer.

Not according to the couenant which I made, &c.] Hereby Vers. 9. he shewes that there should be a difference betweene that

couenant which then was in force, and the newe couenant the which he gaue them hope of. Otherwise the prophet would haue said, I will renew and establish againe with you, the couenant which was broken by your default: but he now saith expressly, that it shall not be like vnto it. Whereas he saith, that the Couenant was made in that *day when he took them by the hand to bring them out of bondage*: he aggravates the crime of their reuolt, by the repetition of so great a benefit: although hee condemnes not the ingratitude of one generation onely: but, as those which were deliuered, reuolted by and by, and their successours likewise fell often into the same fault after the: so he doth in this speech challenge the whole nation of disloyaltie, and of breaking the couenant. When he saith he despised them, or *regarded them not*, he giues them to vnderstand, that although they were once adopted to be his people, yet that should profit them nothing, vnlesse hee succour them by a new remedie. The prophet hath other termes, according as the matter is couched together in the Hebrew text: but that is of no great importance as touching the point now in question.

Ver. 10.

[For this is the couenant, &c.] There are two principall articles in this couenant. The first is touching the free remission of sinnes: the second of the inward reformation of the hearts: there is a third; but that depends vpon the second: & that is the illumination of the minde with the knoweledge of God. Now there are here many things worthy our observation. The first is, that God calles vs to him in vaine, whilest he onely speaketh vnto vs by the voice of man. We must not denie, but that which he teacheth is right and iust; but yet he speakes but to deafe eares; yea and albeit it may seeme that we vnderstand somewhat, yet is it onely an outward sound that beates the aire: for the heart still remains full of rebellion and frowardnesse, casting off the yoke of wholesome doctrine. In a word, Gods word neuer entreteth into the secret of the hearts, beeing of themselves more hard than iron or stones, till he by his Spirit doe soften them: not onely that, but the case is yet farre other-
wise,

wise, for we haue a contrarie law, ingrauen within them, in such wise that multitudes of froward and wicked affections doe raigne therein, which doe daielely prouoke vs to rebellion. In vaine it is then that God doth publish his law vnto vs by the voice of man, if withall he doe not write it in our hearts by his holy Spirit: that is, vnlesse he frame vs and turne vs to his obedience. Now by this it appeares what free will is, and what vprightnesse there is in our nature, before God haue regenerated vs. I graunt that we both will, and choose, and that freely, without constraint: but our will is carried away euen with a furious violence to resist God, and is not able in any thing to subiect it selfe to his righteousness. This is the cause why the law brings nothing but destruction and death with it, whilst it remaines written in tables of stone: as *S. Paul* teacheth, 2. Cor. 3. 3. To be short; then doe we receiue that which God commands with obedient hearts, when he changeth and corrects the naturall peruersitie of them by the worke of his Spirit: otherwise he shall finde in vs nothing but corrupt affections, and a heart wholly inclined to euill. For this sentence of God is cleare and euident, that a new couenant must be made, by which God ingraues his lawes in our hearts, because otherwise it shall be altogether fruitlesse and vnprofitable vnto vs.

Gods word neuer takes place in our hearts, till he hath softened them by his Spirit.

Free will.

The second article is as touching the *free remission of sinns*. Although they haue sinned, saith the Lord, yet will I not withstanding pardon their sinnes. This also is a very necessarie article. For God neuer so frames and fashions vs in obedience to his righteousness, but there still remaines in vs many wicked and corrupt affections of the flesh: yea and the corruption of our nature is regenerate but onely in part: for euery hand-while we feele wicked lusts, and naughtie affections to boyle in vs. And from thence issueth that combat whereof *S. Paul* complains, Rom. 7. 23. where he testifies of himselfe, in the person of all the faithfull, that he saw another law in his members, rebelling against the law of his minde, so that he obeyed not God as he ought to haue done, but failed therein many waies. What good or holy desire.

2
The 12. verse is expounded here.
There remaine wicked and corrupt affections euen in the best after regeneration: and therefore the Prophet had good cause to adde this second article.

desire then soeuer it be which wee haue to liue religiously, yet we shall be alwaies guiltie before God of eternal death, because our conuersation is alwaies farre off from the perfection of the law. There is no stabilitie in the covenant then in regard of vs, vnlesse God doe freely forgiue vs our sinnes. But this is a speciall priuiledge belonging onely to the faithfull, who haue imbraced the covenant offered them in Christ: that is to say, to bee assured that God fauoureth them, and that the sinnes to which they are subiect hurts them not, because they haue a promise of pardon. Neither is this promised them for a day only, but euen to the end of their life: so that their reconciliation with God worketh and hath his efficacie continually. For this grace extends it self throughout y whole kingdom of Christ: which *S. Paul* also doth sufficiently shew 2. Cor. 5. And indeed this is the citie of our refuge, vnto which if wee flee not by faith, it is vnpossible but wee shall be plunged into continuall desperation. For all of vs are fast locked vnder condemnation, and can no otherwise be loosed, but by running to the mercie of God, whereby we are absolved.

Note.

Our citie of
refuge is the
remission of
sinns in Christs
blood.

And they shall be my people.] This is the fruite of the covenant, to wit, that God takes vs for his people, and testifies that he will be the protector of our saluation. For this manner of speech, *and I will be their God*, imports so much. For he is not the God of the dead, neither receiues he vs vnder his safegard, but to make vs partakers of his righteousness, and of life: for *Dauid* crieth excellently in the Psalmes; Blessed are the people who haue the Lord for their God. Now wee neede not doubt but this doctrine belongs euen to vs also. For although the Israelites occupied the first place, and were the right and lawfull heires of the covenant: yet their prerogatiue hinders not vs to haue our portion in it. So that the wider and larger the kingdome of Christ spreads, so far hath this covenant of saluation his efficacie. But some may aske whether there were no certaintie nor efficacie of the promise vnder the law: that is, whether the ancient Fathers were deprived of the grace of the holy Ghost, and whether they

Psal. 33. 12.

Psal. 144. 15.

Question.

they tasted not of Gods fatherly kindnes in the remission of their finnes? For it well appears that they serued God in sinceritie of heart, and in purity of conscience, and that they walked in his commandements: which surely they could not haue done, vnlesse the Spirit of God had taught them inwardly. It also appears that as oft as they thought vpon their finnes, they were comforted, and sustained by the hope and confidence which they had in the free remission of them. But (may some say) it seemes that the Apostle ex-cludes them from hauing part in any of these benefits: in putting ouer the prophecie of *Jeremy* to the coming of Christ. I answer, he simply denies not that God wrote his law in the hearts of those which were his, euen vnder the law, or that hee did not pardon them their finnes: but hee speakes by a comparison from the greater to the lesse. Therefore for as much as the heauenly Father hath more abundantly manifested his power vnder the kingdome of Christ, and hath shed abroad his mercie and grace vpon men; this his so exceeding liberalitie is the cause that the little portion of grace (in comparison) which was shewed to the Fathers vnder the law, comes not into account. Wee see also how darke and intricate the promises then were: so as they onely gaue them some darke glimpse of light, much like the light of the Moone and starres, in comparison of that light of the Gospell, which now shewes it selfe with a surpassing cleerenes. If it bee objected that the faith and obedience of *Abraham* was so excellent that the like is not to be found at this day in all the world: I answer, that the question is not here of mens persons, but of the order and dispensation of gouerning the Church. Moreover, that whatsoever spirituall gifts the Fathers had, was as a thing accidentall to their time. It is not from the purpose then that the Apostle comparing the Law and the Gospell together, takes that from the Law which is proper to the Gospell: and yet this hinders not that God should not make the old fathers partakers of the new couenant. This is the true solution.

Obiection.

Answer.

Obiection.

Answer.

Wee

3

The illumina-
tion of our un-
derstandings is
the worke of
the holie Ghost.

We haue said that the third Article, is as a part of the second before mentioned, namely, *that he would put his lawes into their minde.* For it is a worke of the holy Ghost to illuminate our vnderstandings so, as to know what God wil- leth, and therewithall to bow our hearts to obedience: For the right knowledge of God is such a wisdom as farre sur- passeth the reach of humane vnderstanding: and therefore none can haue it but by the secret reuelation of the holie Ghost. For this cause *Isaiab* speaking of the restauration of the Church, saith, That all her children shall be taught of God, *Isai. 54. 13.* In the same sense also the Prophet *Ieremie* brings in God speaking, All shall know me, *Iere. 31. 34.* For God doth not promise to giue vs that which is already in our power, but that which he himselfe onely giues vs. To be short, these words of the Prophet are as much in effect as if he had said, that our mindes are blinde, and deprived of all true vnderstanding, till such time as they be enlightened by the Spirit of God. There are none then that doe rightly know God, but such as hee manifests himselfe vnto by his especiall grace.

Verse 11.

And they shall no more teach, &c. for all shall know me, &c.]

In the first place he signifies that grace of God shall be pow- red out vpon all estates and degrees: so as there shall be no condition or sexe exempt. Furthermore, hee admonisheth that the simple and ignorant, and such as are of the meanest of the people, are not shut out from this heavenly wisdom, and that neither great nor noble can come thereunto by their finenes of wit, neither by any helpes of learning. Thus God ioynes the poore and those of base estate with the greatest and most noble: so as the first are not hindred by their rudenes and ignorance, neither doe the others mount so high by their owne sharpnes of wit: but that it is the ho- ly Ghost onely which is the schoolmaster to them both a- like. Now wheras a sort of giddie spirits take occasion here- by to abolish the externall preaching of the word, as if it were a thing superfluous vnder the kingdome of Christ: their madnes is easily repulsed. Thus they obiekt: After the
comming

Our base estate
excludes vs not
from grace:
neither doth
our high calling
adde any thing
thereto.

Obiection.

comming of Christ none ought to teach his neighbour any more: and therefore let the ministerie of the word cease, that so place may bee giuen to the inspiration of the holie Ghost. But they leaue out that whereunto we are to haue the most speciall respect. For the Prophet doth not vtterly denie that one should teach another: but his words are, *They shall not teach, saying, know the Lord.* As if hee should say, *Answer.* Mens mindes shall be no more hindred by reason of ignorance, as they were before, that they should not know God. It is certain that doctrine hath a double vse. For first it serues 1 for them which are vtterly without knowledge, that they might begin as it were with the first rudiments, as by the A, B, C, of Christianitie: afterwards also it serues to the end 2 that those which haue made some good beginning, might be taught further. Seeing then that Christians are to profit as long as they liue, it is certaine that none is so ripe in knowledge, that he should not neede to be taught: for this docilitie, that is to say, an humble submission to be taught, *A vwillinger* is a principall part of our wisdom. Now as touching the *to be taught is* true meanes whereby we are to profit, if we will be the fol- *the principall* lowers and Disciples of Christ, *part of our* S. Paul sheweth it in the E- *wisdom.* phesians chap. 4. 11. where he saith, He hath ordained some Pastors, and Doctors for the repairing of the Saints, till we all meete, &c. By this then it appeares, that the Prophet thought nothing lesse than to depriue the Church of so necessarie a benefit. His meaning is onely to shew that God will manifest himselfe both to small and great: as *Joel* also foretelleth, chap. 2. 28. Now we are to note by the way, that this light of ynderstanding is only promised to the Church. Therefore this place belongs to none but to the household of faith.

In that he saith a new Testament, &c.] By putting one of Vers. 13. the contraries, he concludes the abolishing of the other: and takes his argument from the name of the olde Testament which was to bee abolished. For age goes on to decay. Moreouer, for as much as a new is put in the stead thereof, it must needes be that that first should cease: because the se-
cond

cond (as hath been said) is of another qualirie. Now if the whole ministerie of *Moses* endeth, so farre soorth as it is opposed against Christ, then the ceremonies also by consequence are abolished.

CHAP. IX.

- 1 *Then the first Testament had also ordinances of religion and a worldly Sanctuarie.*
- 2 *For the first Tabernacle was made, wherein was the candlesticks, and the table, and the shew bread, which Tabernacle is called the holy places.*
- 3 *And after the second vaile was the Tabernacle, which is called the holiest of all.*
- 4 *Which had the golden Censor, and the Arke of the Testament overlaid round about with gold, wherein the Golden pot that had Manna was, and Aarons Rod that had budded, and the Tables of the Testament.*
- 5 *And ouer the Arke were the glorious Cherubims, shadowing the mercie seate: of which things wee will not now speake particularly.*

Verf. 1.



He first Testament had also &c.] Having spoken in generall of the abolishing of the old Testament, he now applies his speech especially to the ceremonies. His purpose is to shew that there was nothing then in vse, which was not to cease at the comming of Christ. First he saith that there was a certaine rule of diuine seruice in the old Testament, which specially agreed to that time. In the second place, by comparing of things together we shall know what all these ceremonies were, which were commanded in the Law. Some copies haue, The first Tabernacle: but I take it there is some fault in this word Tabernacle: not doubting but some ignorant reader, seeing an Adiectiue to be without a Substantiue, did vnadvisedly adde vnto it Tabernacle, and so for

for want of vnderstanding of things, did referre that to the Tabernacle which was spoken of the Couenant. And I doe not a little wonder how this error hath spread more and more, so that the Greekes with one consent doe reade this place in this manner: but necessitie constraines vs to follow the ancient reading. For the Apostle (as I haue said) hauing spoken of the old Testament, comes now to speake of the ceremonies, which depended as it were vpon it. He signifies then that all the ceremonies of the Mosaicall law are a part of the old Testament, and that they so saue of the same oldnes, that they also must be abolished. Some diuide these two words, and reade, *iustifications and diuine seruices*: but I had rather follow them who ioine them together, & reade, The iustifications of the diuine seruice. For the ordinances which concerned the seruice of God vnder the law, are by the Greekes called Iustifications. This is the meaning, to wit, that all this manner of Gods seruice, which stood in washings, in sacrifices, and other figures, together with the Sanctuarie, were annexed to the old Testament. He calles it a *worldly Sanctuarie*, because that the heavenly veritie was not as yet reuealed in these things: for howsoeuer it was a representation and a figure of the first paterne which had been shewed to *Moses*, yet neuerthelesse there is oddes betweene the image, and the body: and especially when both of them are compared one with another as things opposite, as they be in this place. Wherefore the Sanctuarie was euen *The Sanctuarie* earthly in it selfe, and is rightly placed amongst the world- *earthly, and* ly elements, although it were heavenly as touching the fig- *hous.* nification.

For the first Tabernacle.] Because the Apostle doth but *Ver. 1.* lightly passe over the building of the Tabernacle, staying no longer therein than the necessity of the matter requireth. I also will euen of purpose forbear to explaine the same ouer curiously: so then let vs examine that which shall suffice for the present place. Wee will diuide the Tabernacle into three parts. The first shall be the Court where the people staid. The second, that which was commonly called the Sanctuarie.

3 Sanctuarie. The third, the inmost Sanctuarie, which was called by way of excellencie the most holy place, or the holie of holies. For the first Sanctuarie, which ioyned to the court of the people, he saith there was *the candlestick and the table*, whereupon the *shew bread* was set. But he calles this place in the plurall number, the *holy places*. There was then that secret place *which was called the holiest of all*, which was further off the people, and euen farre off from the Priests also, who were in the first Tabernacle to performe the seruices thereof. For although the first Sanctuary was close and separate from the court of the people, by reason of the vaile which was put betweene them; yet was there a second vaile betweene the Priests and that which was called the most holie place. The Apostle saith that therein was the *Golden censor*, or rather, the altar of incense, or perfume: for I had rather take the Greeke word so. Then, *the Arke of the covenant overlaid with gold: the two Cherubims, the golden pot filled with Manna, Aarons Rod, and the two Tables*. Hitherto the Apostle followeth the description of the Tabernacle. Now where he saith, that the pot into which *Moses* had put the Manna, and that *Aarons* rodde which budded, was in the Arke, with the two Tables: this may seeme to contradict the holy historie, which recites no more to be in the Arke but the two Tables, 1. King. 8. 9. But it is easie to reconcile these two places together. God had commaunded that the pot, and *Aarons* rod should be put before the Testimonie; wherefore it is probable that they were enclosed in the Arke with the two Tables: but when the Temple was builded, euery one of these things was placed by order. And indeede the holy historie recites this as a new thing, to wit, that there was nothing in the Arke but the two Tables.

Verf. 3.

Ver. 4.

Obiection.

Answer.

Verf. 5.

Of which things wee will not now speake particularly.] Because nothing can satisfie curious heads, the Apostle cuts off occasion of falling into those subtilties, which fitted not with the matter in hand, least by too large a recitall of these things, he should breake off the chiefe matter in question. Therefore if there be any who laying aside this admonition of

of the Apostle, shall herein curiously stay himselfe; such a one shall doe it without ground. I confesse indeede that it may so fall out, for some respect, that this long repetition may haue place: but for the present, it is better to bethinke vs of the matter which hee handleth. Now to descant beyond measure, as some doe, is not onely vnprofitable, but also dangerous. Some things there are here which are not obscure, which also are fit for the edification of our faith: but we had need to vse discretion in our choise therein, and to keepe a modest and sober course, to the end we desire not to know more than that which it hath pleased the Lord to reueale vnto vs.

6 Now when these things were thus ordained, the Priests went alwaies into the first Tabernacle, and accomplished the seruice.

7 But into the second went the high Priest alone once every yeere, not without blood, which he offered for himselfe, and for the ignorances of the people.

8 Whereby the holy Ghost this signified, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet opened, while as yet the first Tabernacle was standing.

9 Which was a figure for that present time, wherein were offered gifts and sacrifices that could not make holy, concerning the conscience, him that did the seruice.

10 Which only stood in meates and drinks, and diuers washings, and carnall rites, which were inioyned, vntill the time of reformation.

11 But Christ being come an high Priest of good things to come, by a greater, and more perfect Tabernacle not made with hands, that is not of this building,

12 Neither by the blood of goates and calves: but by his owne blood entred he in once vnto the holy place, and obtained eternall redemption for vs.

Now these things thus ordained, &c.] Omitting all other Verse 6. matters, he vndertakes to deale with that wherein was

N

most

most difficultie. He saith that the Priests which performed the seruices about the sacrifices, were alwaies accustomed to enter into the first Tabernacle: but the high Priest entred only once euery yeere with a solemne sacrifice into the holiest place of all. And of this he gathereth, that whilest *this Tabernacle of the law was standing*, the Sanctuarie was yet closed vp, and the way was no otherwise opened into the kingdome of God, but by the ouerthrowing of this first Tabernacle. We see then how that euen the figure of the olde tabernacle did admonish the Iewes that they were to aspire further. Those then who wittingly doe shut vp the passage, by retaining the shadowes of the law still, doe very foolishly. Therefore to this purpose, in the 8. verse, he takes the first Tabernacle in another sense than heretofore. For in the first verse, it signified the common Sanctuarie; but here it signifies the whole bodie of the Tabernacle. For it is set as opposite to the Sanctuarie of Christ, whereof hee will speake by and by. He saith that the taking downe thereof was to our great profit, because that by the ruine of it, access is giuen vs to come the more familiarly to God.

Verſ. 7.

For himſelfe.] Although the word *Sagaga* among the Hebrewes signifies to erre, and that from thence they deriue this word *Sagaga*, which properly signifies error: yet notwithstanding it is taken generally for all kinde of sinne. For indeede, we neuer sinne but wee are deceived by the intisements of Sathan. True it is that the Apostle meanes not a simple ignorance (as they call it) but vnder this word he also comprehends voluntarie sinnes. But, as I haue said, there is neuer any sinne committed without error or ignorance. For although a man doe sinne wittingly and willingly, yet notwithstanding he must be blinded by his lust, so as he is vnable to iudge rightly, euen forgetting himſelfe, and God likewise. For men neuer runne vpon their owne ruine willingly, vnles being first inwrapped by the fallacies and bewitchings of Satan, they erre from a right iudgement.

Verſe 9.

Which was a ſimilitude.] The Greeke word in mine opinion signifies as much as if hee had said, A second paterne made

made according to the first. For his meaning is that this Tabernacle was a second portraiture answerable to the former. For the picture of a man ought so to be compared with the man himselfe, that when wee see the picture, our mindes may by and by conceine the personage of him that is represented thereby. Moreouer he saith, that *it was a signe for the present time*: to wit, whilst the outward obseruation stood in force: to the end hee might restraine the continuance and vse thereof to the time of the Law. For it agreeth with that which he addes immediatly, to wit, that all the ceremonies were ordained till the time of reformation. Neither is the verbe of the present tence which he vseth repugnant hereunto, when he saith, *in the which sacrifices are offered*. For in that he hath to doe with the Iewes, he speakes by way of yeelding, or granting; as if he were of the number of them that offered sacrifices. As concerning these words, *gifts and sacrifices*, there is the same difference that is betwene the generall, and the speciall.

Sanctifie as touching the conscience.] That is to say, which doe not pearce vnto the soule, to giue true sanctification vnto it. In stead of the word to sanctifie, others translate to consummate or finish: which I reiect not: notwithstanding me thinkes to *sanctifie*, seemes more fitting to the scope of the text. Now to the end the readers may the better vnderstand what the Apostles meaning is, we must note the Antithesis that is betwene the flesh and the conscience. He saith that those who offered sacrifices vnder the Law, could not be washed by them spiritually, or inwardly within the conscience. His reason is added, because al the ceremonies were *carnall*. What leaues he now more vnto them? Some indeed Vers. 10. doe commonly vnderstand this, as if the Apostle should say, that this washing was a profitable schoolmaster among men, seruing them for honestie: but those which are of this opinion, do not weigh the promises, which are added hereunto as they deserue. And therefore it is a fancie which ought vtterly to be reiected. Also they doe ill expound the Iustifications of the flesh, saying, that they are so called, because

Question.

Answer.

Vers. 11.

cause they onely purge, or sanctifie the bodie, seeing the Apostle thereby meanes, that these earthly figures reach not vnto the soule. For although such figures were true testimonies of perfect holinesse, yet had they not this holinesse in them, neither could they giue it vnto men. For it was needfull that the faithfull should bee brought to Christ by such helpes, to the end they might seeke that in him which was wanting in the figures. If it bee demaunded wherefore the Apostle speakes so meanly, and as it were in contempt of the Sacraments ordained of God, in thus lessening of their vertue? I answer, he doth it because he separates them from Christ: for we know that when we esteeme them by themselves, they are but weake elements of the world, as S. Paul calles them, Gal. 4. 9. Whereas he saith, *until the time of reformation*, he alludes to the prophetic of Ierem. 31. 37. for the new couenant succeeded the old; as a reformation of it. He doth purposely name, *meates and drinkes*, and such other things which were of no great importance: because men might the more certainly iudge by these small and light observations, how farre off the Law was from the perfection of the Gospell.

But Christ being come an high Priest, &c.] Now he brings soorth the truth of the things which were vnder the law, to the end that turning away their eyes from the figures, they might looke vnto Christ in whom the substance was to bee found. For he which beleeues that all that which was then shadowed out, was truly manifested in Christ; will no longer entangle his minde about shadowes, but will embrace the truth and the very bodie it selfe. Now we must diligently note the parts wherein he compares Christ, with the high Priest who was in old time vnder the Law. He said that the high Priest onely, entred euery yeere once into the Sanctuarie with blood for the purgation of finnes. Christ hath this in common with him, that he onely is put into the dignitie and office of the high Priest. But yet there is a difference, that Christ is come vpon this, and hath brought with him eternall benefits, which causeth that his Priesthood is perpetuall.

petuall. Secondly, the ancient Priest, & ours who is Christ, had this in common, that both of them entred into the Holiest of all by the Sanctuarie: but in this they differ, that Christ onely is entred into heauen, by the temple of his bodie. Whereas the most holy place was open to the high Priest onely once a yeere, to make the purgation of sinnes, this did alreadie somewhat darkly represent the onely oblation of Christ. This *once* then is common to them both: but to the earthly Priest it was yeerely: and to the heaucnly Priest eternally vntil the consummation of y world. The offering of blood is comon to the both: but there is great difference in the blood: because Christ offered not vp the blood of beasts, but his owne blood. Satisfaction was common to them both, but the satisfaction of the law was reiterated euery yeere, because it was without efficacie: contrariwise, the satisfaction made by Christ, hath his efficacie alwaies, and is the cause of eternall saluation. Thus there is scarcely a word which hath not his weight. Whereas others haue turned it, *Christ an high Priest present, &c.* do not rightly expresse the Apostles meaning. For he signifies that the Leuiticall Priests hauing performed their office vnto the time appointed for them, Christ was put into their place, as wee haue scene chap. 7.

By this clause, *of good things to come*, are signified eternall good things. For as in this place the time to come is opposed to the time present, so also are the good things to come, to those present. The summe is, that wee are brought into the kingdome of heauen by the Priesthood of Christ, and are in such wise made partakers of spirituall righteousness, and of eternall life, that it is vnlawfull for vs to desire any better things. Christ therefore hath wherewithall for to hold vs and satisfie vs in himselfe. By *a greater and more perfect Tabernacle, &c.* Although some expound this place diuers waies, yet I doubt not but the Apostle vnderstands it of the bodie of Christ. For as the Leuiticall Priests in former time entred into the most holy place by the commo Sanctuarie, so Christ is entred into the heauenly glorie by his bodie:

because by taking our flesh, and suffering therein, he obtained this priuiledge to stand now a Mediatour for vs before God. First, the word *Sanctuarie* is fitly and properly transported ouer to the bodie of Christ, because he is the temple wherein the whole Godhead dwelleth. Now it is said, that *by his bodie* he made way to enter into heauen, because that
 1 in the same bodie he consecrated himselfe to God : in it he
 2 was sanctified in true righteousness; in it he prepared him-
 3 selfe to finish the sacrifice. In a word, because that in it he abased himselfe, and endured the death of the crosse : therefore the Father hath exalted him, and giuen him a name aboue euery name: that at the name of Iesus should all knees bow, Philip. 2.8. Thus then hee entred into heauen by his bodie : for in that hee now sits at the right hand of the Father, and in heauen makes request for vs ; it is because hee clothing himselfe with our flesh, hath consecrated it to be a temple for God his Father, and is himselfe sanctified in it, to the end that he might obtaine eternall righteousness for vs, after he had made the purgation for sinnes.

*Christ: body,
a temple in
which his fa-
ther dwells: in
which he also
hath obtained
eternall right-
eousnesse for
vs.*

But yet some may marueile why he should say, that the bodie of Christ was not of *this building* : for it is certaine that he was created of the seede of *Abraham*, and was subiect both to sufferings and to death. I answered, that the question is not here of the substance of his bodie, neither yet of the bodily qualitie, but of that spirituall vertue which floweth vnto vs from his bodie. For in as much as the flesh of Christ is quickning, and a heavenly meate to nourish our soules : in as much as his blood is drinke, and a spirituall washing, wee must not imagine any thing in the one or in the other that is earthly. Moreover, wee are to remember that this is said here in regard of the old Tabernacle, which was made of wood, of copper, of skinnes, of diuers imbroidrings of gold and siluer, that is to say, of dead things : but the flesh of Christ was inspired by the power of God, to the end it might be a liuing and spirituall temple.

Verf. 12.

Not by the blood of goates and calves, &c.] All that is here said tends to this, that those things which are in Christ are
 so

so exceedingly excellent, that they worthily darken and put downe all the figures of the Law. For what thinke you shall the price of his blood be valued at, if it be set in common with the blood of brute beasts? What shall the purgation of our sinnes obtained by his death, be, if the purgings of the Law do yet hold their strength? As soone then as Christ once presents himselfe with the efficacie of his death, all figures must of necessitie cease.

13 For if the blood of buls and goates, and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling them that are uncleane, sanctifieth as touching the purifying of the flesh;

14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, which through the eternall Spirit offered himselfe without fault to God, purge your conscience from dead workes, to serue the liuing God?

15 For this cause he is the Mediatour of the new Testament that through death, which was for the redemption of the transgressions that were in the former Testament, they which were called, might receiue the promise of eternall inheritance.

16 For where a Testament is, there must be the death of him that made the Testament.

17 For the Testament is confirmed when men are dead: for it is yet of no force as long as he that made it is aliue.

FOr if the blood of buls &c.] Many haue been led aside by Ver. 13. misunderstanding this place; and all by reason they did not consider, that the Sacraments are here handled, which haue a spirituall signification. The purgation of the flesh they expound as that which hath place only amongst men: euen as prophane men haue had their purifications to purge the infamie and wickednesses which haue been committed. But this exposition is too prophane: for iniurie is offered to the promises of God, if so be the effect of them be only restrained to policie. Wee finde this sentence very often in Moses, to wit, Iniquitie shall be purged, when the sacrifice shall be duly performed. This doubtlesse is indeede a spirituall doctrine of faith. Moreover, seeing all sacrifices were

*The blood of
beasts purified
sacramentally:
but Christs
blood doth it
really.*

Ver. 14.

ordained to bring men to Christ: (the eternall saluation of the soule onely depending on him) so the sacrifices were true testimonies of this saluation. What meanes the Apostle then, when hee mentioneth the purification of the flesh? Surely he speakes of the figuratiue or sacramentall purgation, in this sense; If the blood of beasts were a true witnes of purgation, so as it sanctified, and did purifie sacramentally: how much more shall Christ himselfe who is the truth, I say not beare witnes of purgation by outward ceremonie, but shall indeede giue it to the consciences? And therefore it is an argument from the signes to the thing signified: because the effect of the thing farre excelleth the truth of the signes.

Who by the eternall Spirit, &c.] Now he shewes very plainly, from whence the death of Christ takes his dignitie, to wit, from the vertue of the Spirit, and not from the outward act. For Christ indeed suffered as hee was man: but this his death is healthfull for vs, by reason of the efficacie which came from the Spirit. For the sacrifice of our eternall purgation was more than a humane worke. And for this cause he calleth *the eternall Spirit*, to the end wee might know, that the reconciliation which he made was eternall. When hee saith *without spot*, although he alludes to the sacrifices of the law, where the beasts that were sacrificed ought to bee free from imperfection or fault: yet notwithstanding his meaning is that Christ onely is the proper and lawfull sacrifice to appease God. For some fault might alwaies be found in the others. And for that cause he said before that the covenant of the law was not so perfect, but some fault was to be found therewith. But this perfection which is in Christ, hath nothing in it which is not full in all points.

*Christs sacrifice
absolutely perfect
in all points*

By *dead workes*, he vnderstands those works which beget death, or which are fruites of death. For euen as the life of the soule consists in the coniunction that wee haue with God; so those who are estranged from him by sinne, are verry rightly esteemed dead. Now wee are to note the end of this purgation: to wit, *that we should serue the lining God.*

For

For although we be washed by Christ, yet it is not that wee should by and by goe wallow our selues afresh in our dung: but that our puritie might serue to the glorie of God. Moreover, the Apostle hereby teacheth vs, that nothing proceedeth from vs which can be acceptable vnto God, till we be purged by the blood of Christ. For seeing wee are all of vs enemies of God, before wee be reconciled, he must in his iustice hate all our workes. The beginning therefore of the true and lawfull seruice of God, is reconciliation. Furthermore, seeing there is no work of ours so pure and cleane without spot, that of it selfe can bee acceptable and well pleasing vnto God: therefore it is necessarie that the blood of Christ should come betweene to wash away all the spots that are in them. Thus wee must note the seemly antithesis which he makes betweene the *living God*; and *dead workes*.

*Nothing wee
doe is accep-
table in Gods
sight, till we be
purged by the
blood of Christ.*

And therefore he is the Mediatour of the new Testament, Ver. 15.
8cc.] He concludes that we are not now to looke for any other Priest, because Christ fully and absolutely performes this office vnder the new Testament. For he attributes not this honour of the Mediatourship to Christ, to the end that others should ioyne with him in that office: but hee contends, and with forcible arguments maintaines, that all others were deposed, when the office was once giuen to Christ. But to confirme this more fully, he also recites how Christ obtained this office of a Mediatour: to wit, *through his death, which was for the transgression*. If this be found in Christ alone, and is not to be found in any other, it followes that he is the true and onely Mediatour. He also toucheth the vertue & efficacie of his death, when he saith y the price was paid for sinnes, which could not be purged by the blood of beasts vnder the *former Testament*. By which words hee would haue the Iewes to passe from the law to Iesus Christ. For if the weaknes of the law is so great, that all the remedies which it giueth to wash away sinnes, doe not accomplish that which they signifie; what is hee that would rest himselfe in them, as in a sure haven? This onely point, I say, ought to be a sufficient spurre vnto them to desire a reformation

*They must
needs be in
perpetuall an-
guish of con-
science, that
rest only in the
doctrine of the
law.*

Question.

Answer.

mation of the law: because whilest they rest still in that, it cannot be avoided but they must fall into a perpetual anxietie of conscience. Contrariwise, when we are once come to Christ, nothing remaines that may torment vs, because in him we finde and obtaine full and perfect redemption. Thus then by these words hee shewes the weaknes of the law, to the end the Iewes should no longer rest in it: and withall teacheth them to keepe themselves close to Christ, because in him is to bee found whatsoever can bee desired to quiet their consciences. Now if any aske whether the sinnes of the Fathers were pardoned or no vnder the law? that solution which I gaue erewhile must be held: to wit, that they were pardoned, but alwaies by the meanes of Christ: It followes then that they were still held vnder the bondage of condemnation, notwithstanding all the outward purgations the law could afford them. For this cause *S. Paul* saith, that the law was an ordinance that was against vs. For when the sinner presented himselfe, and did publickly confesse that hee was indebted to God, and in offering of an innocent beast did acknowledge himselfe worthe of eternall death: what gained he by his sacrifice, vnlesse wee might peraduenture say that he sealed to his owne death by this obligation? In a word, they had no better meanes to assure them of the remission of their sinnes, than in looking vnto Christ. Now if the only beholding of Christ did wash away their sinnes, they could neuer be deliuered from them, if they should still haue rested in the law. True it is that *David* saith, *Psalm 32.1*. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not sinne: but to attaine the ioyfull tidings of this blessednes, it was necessarie for him to turne his eyes from the law, and to fasten them vpon Christ. For he shall neuer be deliuered from condemnation, that abideth in the law.

They which were called receiued the promise, &c. [The covenant which God hath made with vs tends to this end, that wee being adopted of him for his children, are at the last made inheritors of eternall life. The Apostle shewes that we obtaine so great a benefite by the meanes of Christ: from whence

whence it appeares that the accomplishment of this his covenant is in him. As touching *the promise of the eternall inheritance*, he takes it for the heritage promised: as if he should haue said, The promise of eternall life hath no otherwise had his effect towards vs for our enioying of it, but by the death of Christ. It is very sure that life was promised in old time to the Fathers, and the same which is now at this day, was from the beginning the heritage of the children of God: but wee enter not into the possession of it, vnlesse the blood of Christ doe goe before. He makes expresse mention of those which *are called*: to the end hee might moue the Iewes with the greater care, who were partakers of this vocation. For it is a speciall fauour of God when the knowledge of Christ is giuen vs: and therefore so much the more ought wee to take heede, that in despising so inestimable a treasure, our spirits doe not wander elsewhere. Some take this word *called* here, for elected: but vnfitly, as I thinke. For the Apostle teacheth here the very same thing that *S. Paul* doth, Rom. 3. 25. to wit, that righteousness and saluation was obtained for vs by the blood of Christ, but we receiue it by faith.

For where a Testament is, &c.] Were there but this one Ver. 16. place, yet were it sufficient to shew that this Epistle was not written in Hebrue: for *Berith*, in the Hebrue tongue, signifies Couenant, and not Testament. But because the Greeke word *Diathese*, hath these two significations, to wit, of the Couenant, and of the Testament: for this cause, the Apostle alluding to the second signification, affirmeth that the promises could not otherwise bee of any weight or stabilitie, vnlesse they had been sealed by the death of Christ. Which he proues by the common right of Testaments: the effect of which is deferred till the death of the Testator. Although it may yet seeme that the Apostle grounds his speech vpon too weake a reason: so as that which he saith may easily be refuted. For God made no Testament vnder the law, but made a Couenant with the ancient people. And thus the Apostle could not gather from the thing it selfe, neither yet from

from the name, that the death of Christ was necessarie. For if he would inferre by the matter it selfe, that it was needful Christ should die, because the Testament is not ratified, till the death of the Testator come betweene: some might presently reply, that *Berith* (which word *Moses* vseth here and there to this purpose) is a Couenant made betweene the living: so as wee cannot thinke otherwise of the matter. As touching the *name*, hee simply alludes, as I haue said, to the signification of the Greeke word *Diashece*, which hath two significations: and therefore hee chiefly insists vpon the *thing*. Neither is this repugnant to that which some might say, that it was a couenant which God made with his people. For this couenant was like a Testament, because it was established, and confirmed by blood. This principle then must be retained, that God neuer vsed signes at randon, nor without cause. Now so it is that God in confirming of the Couenant intermingled blood therewithall. It follows then that it was not a contract betweene the living (as they say) but such a contract as required death to come betweene. For a Testament hath this condition proper vnto it, that it begins to take effect after death. If we then consider that the Apostle contends rather about the substance, than the name: moreouer if we come to weigh with our selues that he takes that (which I haue said) for a thing without controuersie, to wit, that God hath ordained nothing idly or in vaine; there will be no great difficultie. If it be obiected, that the Gentiles in making their covenants haue vsed sacrifices to another end: I answere, it is true: but God did not borrow the vse of sacrifices from their customes, but the Gentiles rather tooke the beginning of all their corrupt and bastardly sacrifices from the ordinances of God. Wherefore wee must alwaies returne to this point, that the couenant of God which was confirmed with blood, is fitly compared to a Testament, because it was of the same nature and condition.

Obiection.

Answer.

18 *Wherefore neither was the first ordained without blood.*

19 *For when Moses had spoken euery precept to the people according*

according to the law, he tooke the blood of calves, and of goates, with water and purple wooll and hysope, and sprinkled both the booke and all the people,

20 Saying, *This is the blood of the Testament, which God* *Exod. 24. 8.* *hath appointed vnto you.*

21 *Moreover, he sprinkled likewise the Tabernacle with blood also, and all the ministring vessels.*

22 *And almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no remission.*

23 *It was then necessarie, that the similitudes of beaueuly things should be purified with such things: but the beaueuly things themselves are purified with better sacrifices than those.*

W Herefore also &c.] By this it appeares that hee in- *Verf. 18.*
sists chiefly vpon the substance, rather than simply
grounding his speech vpon the name: although the Apostle
hath turned the word which the language affoorded him
wherein he wrote, to his profit. As if some speaking also of
the couenant of God (which the Greekes often call *Martyria*,
that is to say, witnesse) to praise and extoll the same;
amongst other commendations should vse these words;
Surely this Couenant must needes rightly be called Testi-
monie, to which the heauenly Angels gaue testimonie from
aboue; to the which there were also so many credible wit-
nesses here on earth, to wit, all the holy Prophets, Apostles,
and so infinite a companie of Martyrs: yea to the sealing
wherof euen the Sonne of God was giuen as a witnes there-
of in his owne person: if one should speake on this man-
ner, no man would say there were any absurditie in it. And
yet notwithstanding the proprietie of the Hebrue word
Theuda, doth not expressly conclude this: but because no-
thing is said herein which agrees not very well to the mat-
ter, no wise man will stand to descant too curiously about
the word. Thus then the Apostle affirms that the old Te-
stament was *dedicated with blood*. From whence he gathers
that men were thereby admonished, it could not be other-
wise

wise stable and effectuell vnlesse death came in betweene. For he denies that the blood of beasts which was then shed, was able to ratifie an eternall couenant. And that this may be the better vnderstood, the manner of sprinkling which *Moses* here recites is to be noted. First he teacheth that this *Couenant* was dedicated, not as though it had any prophanes in it selfe, but because there is nothing so holy which men prophane not by their vncleannes, if God himselfe should not preuent and remedie the same by renewing all things. This consecration then was made in respect of men, who onely stand in neede of it.

Verf. 19.
We can nei-
ther seeke, nor
serue the true
God, till faith
apprehend the
blood of Christ.

He afterwards addes, that *the Tabernacle, with all the vessels, yea and the booke* it selfe also was sprinkled with blood: by which ceremonie the people were aduertised that it was impossible either to seeke God, or to behold him vnto saluation, or to serue him duly, vnlesse faith had alwaies an eye to the blood that came betweene. For first of al we must needs graunt that the maiestie of God is seareful, and the way thither is nothing els but a deadly labyrinth, till such time as wee know that hee is pacified towards vs by the blood of Christ: and that by the same blood we may haue our accessse thereunto. On the other side also all seruices are faultie and vncleane, vnlesse Christ wash and clense them by the sprinkling of his blood. For the Tabernacle was as it were a visible image of God: and the ministring vessels, as they were ordained to serue God withall, so were they also resemblances of the true seruice. Now if nothing of al this were available to the people as touching saluation, vnlesse blood came betweene, from thence we may easily gather that we haue nothing to doe with God, vnlesse Christ by his blood present himselfe betweene him and vs. And in this regard, the very doctrine it selfe, although it be the will and inuiolable truth of God, yet it shall haue no efficacie in vs to our profit, vnlesse it be consecrated by blood: as by this verse is well expressed. I know that others expound it otherwise: for after their sense, The Tabernacle is the bodie of the Church: the vessels are all the faithfull, by whose ministerie God serues himselfe. But that which I haue said agrees much better.

For

For as soone as they were to call vpon God, they turned towards the Sanctuarie: and it is a manner of speech common in the Scripture, to say they presented themselues before the face of the Lord, when they appeared in the Temple.

This is the blood of the Testament.] If it be the blood of the Testament, the Testament then is not established and ratified without blood: neither is blood sufficient for purgation without the Testament: wherefore it is necessarily required that both of them be ioyned together. And wee see also that the figure and outward signe was not giuen, till the law was expounded. For what Sacrament were it, if the

Verf. 10.

word did not go before? therefore the signe is but as a thing hanging and depending vpon the word. And we must note withall that this word is not a mumbling of it like a charme vsed in some magicall arte, but that which is distinctly pronounced with a lowd voyce; and it must also be spoken to the people: all which the words of the couenant *which was*

The word and the Sacrament must goe together.

appointed vnto you, doe shew. Therefore they abuse the Sacraments, nay they wickedly corrupt them, when as there is no exposition of the commandement added; which exposition is, as you would say, the life and soule of the Sacrament. The Papists then who separate the vnderstanding of the things signified from the signes, doe retaine the dead elements onely without any efficacie. This place admonisheth vs, that all the promises of God are then profitable vnto vs, when they are established, and confirmed by the blood of Christ. For when S. Paul witnesseth, 2. Cor. 1. 2. that all the

Exposition of the word, the life and soule of the Sacrament.

promises of God are Yea and Amen in Christ, it is then performed when his blood is ingrauen in our hearts as a seale: or rather when we not only heare God speake: but doe also therewithall see Christ presenting himselfe for a pledge of those things which the worde vttereth. If so bee this thought possesse vs: to wit, that all that which wee reade is not only written with inck, but with the blood of the Sonne of God: and that when the Gospell is preached this blood distilleth with the voyce; surely wee shall be so much the more attentue, and shall receiue the word with much greater

The promises profit vs nothing, vntlesse saith see them written in our hearts with the blood of Christ.

For when S. Paul witnesseth, 2. Cor. 1. 2. that all the promises of God are Yea and Amen in Christ, it is then performed when his blood is ingrauen in our hearts as a seale: or rather when we not only heare God speake: but doe also therewithall see Christ presenting himselfe for a pledge of those things which the worde vttereth. If so bee this thought possesse vs: to wit, that all that which wee reade is not only written with inck, but with the blood of the Sonne of God: and that when the Gospell is preached this blood distilleth with the voyce; surely wee shall be so much the more attentue, and shall receiue the word with much greater

ter.

ter reuerence, than euer wee did before.

The *sprinkling*, whereof *Moses* makes mention, was once a figure of this. Although there bee more to be vnderstood in these words, than *Moses* expresseth. For ye heare him not say that the booke was sprinkled, but the people: neither makes he any mention at all of *goates*, or of *wooll died in purple*, nor of *hysope*. Now as touching the *booke*, although it cannot bee plainly prooued that it was sprinkled, yet there is some probable coniecture of it, whereby wee may gather that it is so, because it is said, that *Moses* tooke the booke before all the people and read it in their hearing, after the sacrifice was ended: to the end the people might enter into an obligation vnto God, answering to the solemne covenant pronounced by the mouth of *Moses*. As touching the rest, it seemes to me the Apostle hath intermingled diuers purgations, of which wee may giue the same reason. And surely no inconuenience is in it; seeing he handles a generall point touching the purgation of the olde Testament, which was made by blood. Now whereas they made a *sprinkle of hysope*, and of *purple wooll*, we neede not doubt but they represented the mysticall sprinkling which is made by the holy Spirit. We know that *Hysope* hath a singular vertue to purge and to digest superfluous humours: so Christ vseth his spirit as a water-sprinkle to sprinkle vs with his blood, when as hee giueth a liuely feeling of repentance,

- 1 when he consumes the peruerse affections of our flesh, and
- 2 when he dieth vs with the rich and noble colour of his righteousness. For we must not imagine that God ordained these things for nothing. *Dauid* also in the 51. Psalm alludes to this when hee saith; Purge me O Lord with hysope, and I shall be cleane. Those who will be sober in searching out the meaning of these things, will content themselues with that which we haue touched vpon this place, and will spare their labour to goe search out higher speculations.

Verf. 22.

And almost all things under the law, &c.] When he saith *almost*, it seemes his meaning is to shew that there are some other things which are purged after another manner. And indeed

indeed they often vsed washings with water both to clense themselves withall, as also other impure things. Notwithstanding euen this water had no vertue to clense but as they had it from the sacrifices: so as the Apostle saith true, when for a conclusion he sets downe, that *without shedding of blood there was no remission*. Wherefore impuritie was imputed vntill such time as it was clensed by sacrifice. And as out of Christ there is neither puritie nor saluatiō, so without blood nothing could be pure nor healthfull: for Christ must neuer be separated from the sacrifice of his death. But the Apostles meaning was simply to say, that this signe was added alwaies in a manner. And if it fell out that the purgation were not sometimes so made, yet notwithstanding it depended vpon the blood, seeing all the ceremonies did as you would say borrow their vertue from this generall purgation. Neither are we to imagine that euery particular man among the people was sprinkled: (for if it had bin so, how could so little a portion of blood haue satisfied so great a multitude?) notwithstanding the purgation came to all. So then this word *almost*, is as much as if it had been said, The vse of this ceremonie was very frequent, so as it was very seldome left out in ordinarie purgations. For whereas *Chrysostome* thinks that by this word is signified an improprietie, because all was there in figures onely, it is nothing neere the Apostles meaning. *There is no remission*. By this meanes men were shut out from before the face of God: for in as much as hee is iustly angrie with them all, they could not promise themselves to finde any fauour with him, till he were appeased. Now there was but one meane whereby to appease him: to wit, by the satisfaction which was made by blood. Wherefore we must looke for no pardon of sins, if we bring not blood. Which wee then doe, when by faith we haue our recourse to the death of Christ.

There is but one meane to procure reconciliation: which is the blood of Christ.

Verf. 23.

It was the necessarie, &c.] To the end none should obiect, that the blood by which the old Testament was cōsecrated, was not the blood of the Testator; the Apostle preuents it, and saith, that wee are not to marueile if this Tabernacle

which was earthly, were consecrated by the sacrifices of beasts: for it was to the end there might be an agreement, and similitude betweene the purgation and the things purged. But it was needfull that this heauenly paterne should be consecrated by a diuers fashon from the other: for in this respect, goates and calves serue to no purpose: whence it followes, that it is necessarie the death of the Testator should come between. The sense then is thus; Seeing there was nothing in the law but earthly resemblances of heauenly and spirituall things, the manner of purging also was carnall and figuratiue. But seeing the heauenly paterne receiues nothing from the earthly, it requires another blood than the blood of beasts, which may bee answerable to the excellencie thereof. Thus the death of the Testator is required, to the end he may truly consecrate the Testament. He calles *heauenly things*, the kingdome of Christ which is spirituall, and which hath a full reuelation of the truth. Also he takes *better sacrifices*, for a better sacrifice. For there is no more but one: but because hee might the better make the Antithesis, he vseth the plurall number.

24 *For Christ is not entred into the holy places that are made with hands, which are similitudes of the true Sanctuarie, but is entred into very heauen, to appeare now in the sight of God for vs,*

25 *Not that he should offer himself often, as the high Priest entred into the holy place euery yeere with blood,*

26 *(For then must he haue often suffered since the foundation of the world) but now in the end of the world hath he been made manifest, once to put away sinne by the sacrifice of himselfe.*

27 *And as it is appointed vnto men that they shall once die, and after that commeth the iudgement:*

28 *So Christ was once offered to take away the sinnes of many, and to them that looke for him, shall he appeare the second time without sinne vnto saluation.*

FOr *Christ is not entred, &c.*] This is a confirmation of the former sentence. He spake of the true Sanctuarie, that is to say, of the heavenly: now he addes that Christ is entred into it: whence it followes that it is requisite there should be such a confirmation, as might agree with the nature of the Sanctuarie. He takes this word *holy places*, for the Sanctuarie. He saith, *it is not made with hands*, because it should not be esteemed amongst the creatures which are subiect to corruption. For hee meanes not here the heauen which wee see with our eyes, and that wherein the starres doe shine, but the glorie of the kingdome of God, which is farre aboue all heauens. He calles it the old Sanctuarie; of the Greek word, which wee may turne, a figure answering to the true, that is to say, to the spirituall: because all externall figures doe represent before vs as in a glasse, that whereof otherwise the bodily senses are vncapable. The Greeke authors do sometimes vse this very word, when they speake of the Sacraments of the Christian Church: and that very fitly and to good purpose, because euery Sacrament is a visible image of things inuisible.

Now to appeare in the sight of God for vs.] Thus the Leuiticall Priest in old time presented himselfe in the name of all the people, before the face of God, but it was onely in figure: now the very truth and full effect of the figure is in Christ. For the Arke was a figure of Gods presence: but Christ presents himselfe, and indeede appeares before the face of God to obtaine fauour for vs: so as we haue no more cause of feare to approch to the iudgement seate of God, where we haue so good an Aduocate, vnder whose safegard and protection we are in safetie and securitie. True it is that Christ was our Aduocate heretofore when hee dwelt vpon the earth: but yet in regard of our infirmitie, he is ascended into heauen to take the charge of maintaining our cause. As often then as mention is made of his ascension into heauen, wee ought therewithall to remember the great good which comes vnto vs thereby: to wit, that he appeares now before God to defend our cause. It is a foolish question

then which some doe aske, and quite from the purpose, to wit, whether Christ was not alwaies present there. For the Apostle disputes here onely of the intercession, by which he entred into the celestiaall Sanctuarie.

Verf. 25.
Obiection.
Answer.

Not that he should offer himselfe often, &c.] How is he then a Priest, may some man say, if he make no sacrifices? I answer, it is not required in the person or office of a Priest to be alwaies in the continuall act of offering sacrifice. For in the law it selfe there was euery yeere certaine daies ordained for the chiefeest sacrifices: and the sacrifices which were ordinarily performed, had their limits to the morning, and the euening. Now seeing this only sacrifice that Christ once offered hath alwaies his strength and vertue, yea and is perpetuall as touching the efficacie thereof, wee must not wonder if his eternall Priesthood be established in the vertue of this sacrifice, which neuer perisheth, or hath an end. And here againe he shewes what difference there is, and in what things, betweene Christ and the Leuiticall Priesthood. As touching the Sanctuarie, he hath spoken heretofore: but he notes a difference in the kinde of sacrifice, because Christ offered *himselfe*, and not a beast. And then hee notes another difference, to wit, that *he did not often offer* this sacrifice, as vnder the law, where they often, yea and almost continually reiterated their sacrifices.

Verf. 26.

For then he must haue often suffered, &c.] He sheweth how absurd and vnreasonable a thing it should be, if wee content not our selues with the onely sacrifice of Christ. For from thence he concludes, that he must then haue often suffered, because death is alwaies ioyned with the sacrifice. Now there is no reason at all to grant this latter: it followes then that the vertue of this onely sacrifice is eternall, and stretcheth it selfe vnto all times. He saith, *since the foundation of the world*, because that in all times since the beginning there haue bin sinnes which haue had neede of purgation. If then the sacrifice of Christ had not been effectuell from the beginning, none of the Fathers had obtained saluation. For seeing that of themselues they were culpable before God,

Christ's sacrifice
effectuell from
the beginning.

and

and deserued his wrath, they had bin destitute of the remedie of redemption, and had had no meanes to escape the iudgement seate of God, vnles Christ by enduring of death once, had suffered from the beginning of the world to the end thereof, for the obtaining of Gods fauour for men. And therefore let vs satisfie our selues with this onely sacrifice, vnlesse peraduenture wee expect many deaths of Christ. By this it also evidently appeares how frivoulous that distinction of the Papists is, in which subtilty they so much please themselves, when they say that the offering vp of Christ vpon the crosse was bloodie; but the sacrifice of the Masse, which they forge to be offered vp euery day, is without blood. For if this suttile shift may haue place, the Spirit of God shall be blamed of vnadvisednes, because he remembered not himselfe concerning this. For the Apostle takes it for a thing out of question, that there is no sacrifice without death. I passe not, that the ancient Doctors haue spoken thus: for it is not in the power of men to forge what sacrifices they list. This principle of the holy Ghost remaines sure, that *sins are not purged by sacrifices, vnlesse there be effusion of blood.* Therefore it is an inuention of the diuell, to hold that Christ should be often offered. *But now in the end of the world he appeared once, &c.* He calles *the end of the world*, that which S. Paul calles the fulnes of time, Gal. 4: for the time was then expired, which the Lord had ordained by his eternall decree. And by this meanes the curiosities of men are answered, to the end they should not presume to enquire; some, why it came not sooner; others, why rather then, than at another time: for we ought to rest and stay our selues in the secret counsell of God, who best knowes to giue a reason of it, although it be not manifested to vs. To bee short, the Apostle signifies that the death of Christ fell out iust at that time wherein his Father sent him into the world for that purpose: who as he hath in his owne power the lawfull government of all things, so hath he the times also, seeing hee ordreth them by an admirable wisdom, howsoeuer it bee often hidden from vs. Moreouer, this consummation or

The frivoulous distinction of the Papists, touching the bloodie and unbloodie sacrifice.

end, is opposed to the imperfection of the time past: for God did so keepe the people of the old Testament in suspense, that one might easily iudge it was not yet come to a firme and setled estate. For this cause *S. Paul* teacheth in the 1. Cor. 10. 11. that the ends of the world are come vpon vs, signifying therby that the kingdom of Christ hath brought the fulfilling of all things. But if the fulnes of time were then when Christ appeared to purge our sinnes, they doe him great iniurie and outrage who would that his sacrifice should be renued; as if all things were not fulfilled at his death. He then appeared once: for if the thing should bee done the second, or the third time, there should be imperfection in the first oblation: which were a thing repugnant to perfection. *For the destruction of sinne, by the sacrifice of himselfe.* This agreeth with the prophecie of *Daniel*, by which the end of the sacrifices was foretolde, after the promise made of the sealing vp, and abolishing of sins. For to what end should purgation serue after the destruction of sinnes? Now this *destruction* consists in this, that sinnes are no more imputed to those who haue their refuge to the sacrifice of Christ: for although necessitie be laid vpon vs to aske pardon euery day, because we do euery day prouoke the wrath of God afresh against vs, notwithstanding for as much as wee are alwaies reconciled to God by the pledge of Christ his onely death, and not otherwise: therefore it is rightly said that sinne is *destroyed* by it.

How sinne is
said to be de-
stroyed.

Verf. 27.

And as it is appointed vnto men to die once, &c.] The meaning is this, seeing that wee waite with patience for the day of iudgement after the death of man, because it is a common law of nature the which it is not lawful to resist: wherefore should there be lesse patience in waiting for the second comming of Christ? For if so be the long space of time doe derogate nothing from the hope of the blessed resurrection amongst men, what absurditie were it to giue lesse honour to Christ? Now we giue him lesse, if we call him to a second death, seeing he is dead once for all. If it be objected that some haue died twice, as *Lazarus*, and such other, the solution

Obiection.

tion is easie, to wit, the Apostle speakes here of the ordinarie *Answer.*
condition of men; so that those which in a moment shalbe *1. Cor. 15. 51.*
dispoyled of corruption by a sudden change, are excepted *1. Thess. 4. 17.*
out of this number. For in this manner of speech he com-
prehends none but those which of long time haue waited in
the dust for the redemption of their bodies. *He shall appeare* *Verf. 13.*
the second time without sinne. The Apostle still aimes at this
marke, to wit, that we should not vex our selues with vaine
and froward desires after new purgations, because the death
of Christ alone, is sufficient for vs. And therefore he saith,
that he *once* appeared with sacrifice to purge away sinnes,
and that by his second appearing he shall openly manifest
what efficacie his death hath had, so as sinne shall no more
haue power to hurt. *To abolish sinnes*, that is, by his satisfa-
ction to deliuer those from the fault, and from condemna-
tion which haue sinned. He saith *many*, for all: as in Rom. 5.
15. True it is that Christs death profits not all: but this
comes to passe, because their incredulitie hindreth them.
But it were in vaine to contend hereabouts in this place, be-
cause the Apostle disputes not whether the death of Christ
profits a few or many: but his plaine meaning is, that hee
died for others, and not for himselfe. Wherefore he oppo-
seth *many*, to one onely.

But what meanes he by these words, that Christ shall *ap-
peare without sinne*? By the word *sinne*, some vnderstand the
purgation or sacrifice purging sin: as Rom. 8. 3. and 2. Cor.
5. 21. and in many other places of *Moses*: but in my iudge-
ment, he meant something more speciall, to wit, that when
Christ shall come hee shall manifest how true it is that hee
hath abolished sinnes: so as there shall be no more need of
any other sacrifice to appease God. As if hee should say,
when wee shall come before the iudgement seate of Christ,
then wee shall feele that nothing was wanting in his death.
To which that also is to be referred which he addes by and
by after, *To saluation to those which looke for him*: Others doe
construe it otherwise on this manner; To those that looke
for him for saluation. But I thinke the other sense is more

proper. For his meaning is, that those shall seele a full saluation from Christ, who with quiet minds doe rest vpon it. For this *looking for*, is to be referred to the circumstance of the present matter. True it is that the Scripture in other places attributes this in common to all the faithfull; that they waite for the comming of the Lord, to the end that by it they may be discerned from the vnbeleeuers; to whom also the onely mention of this his comming is fearefull as soone as they heare tell of it: but because the Apostle contends now that we ought to rest our selues satisfied in the onely sacrifice of Christ, he calles it *the looking for of Christ*, when being contented with this onely redemption, we lust not after new remedies or helps.

CHAP. X.

or, with the same.

*Leuit. 16. 14.

Verf. 1.

1. For the law hauing the shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can neuer with those sacrifices, which they offer yeare by yeare continually sanctifie the commers therunto.
2. For would they not then haue ceased to haue beene offered, because that the offerers once purged, should not haue had no more conscience of sinnes.
3. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance againe e-very yeare.
4. For it is vnpossible that the blood of Bulls and goats should take away sinnes.

FOr the law hauing the shadow, &c.] He borrows this similitude from the art of painting: for he takes this word *shadow* in this place, otherwise than it is taken, Col. 2. 17, where S. Paul calles the old ceremonies, shadows, because they had not the very substance of the things in them, which they did represent. But the Apostle saith here; they were like rude draughts, which are but the shadows of the lively painting. For painters are wont to drawe that which they purpose to coun-

counterfeit or represent with a cole, before they set on the liuely colours with the pensill. The Apostle then puts this difference between the law and the Gospell: to wit, that that which at this day is drawne and painted with fresh and liuely colours, was onely shadowed out vnder the law by a rude or grosse draught. Thus he yet againe confirmes that which he said before, to wit, that the law was no vaine thing, neither the ceremonies thereof vnprofitable. For although it had not the perfect image of heavenly things, as if the workeman had put his last indeauour to it, yet euen this rough draught was greatly profitable to the Auncient Fathers: albeit our condition be now much better. And let vs obserue, that euen those things which are now set before our eyes, were shewed to them a farre off. And therefore both we, and they haue the same Christ, the same righteousness, the same sanctification, and the same saluation: there is no difference or diuersitie, but in the manner of setting them forth. I thinke by these words *of good things to come*, he meanes eternall good things. I confesse indeede that the kingdome of Christ which we now enioy, was long agoe foretold to come: but the words of the Apostle signifie that we haue the liuely pourtraiture of good things to come. He meanes then that sample and spirituall patterne, the full enioying whereof is deferred vntill the day of the resurrection, and to the world to come. And yet I doe againe confesse that these good things began to be reuealed from the beginning of Christ his kingdome: but the question is now, that the *good things to come* in this place are not onely so called in regard of the old Testament, but because we also doe yet hope and waite for them.

A similitude setting forth the difference between the law and the Gospell.

The Jewes and Gentiles haue but one means of saluation for the substance: the diuersitie stands onely in the manner of reuelation.

Which they offered yeere by yeere continually:] He speakes chiefly of the yeerely sacrifice, whereof mention is made Leuit. 16. although in naming one kind, he comprehends the whole. Thus he reasoneth then, Where there is no more conscience and remorse for sinne, there also is no more need of oblations. Now vnder the Law they offered one and the same offering often. Therefore it followes that God

was

was not satisfied; the condemnation taken away, neither the consciences of men quieted: for if it had been otherwise, they would then have ceased to offer any more sacrifices. Moreover, we are diligently to obserue, that he saith *with the same sacrifices*, which had the like reason. For they were esteemed rather by the same ordinance of God, than of diuers beasts. And this argument alone is sufficient of it selfe to refute the subtiltie of the Papists, by which they thinke they finely auoyde the absurditie of excusing the sacrifice of the Masse. For when we tell them it is superfluous to reiterate the sacrifice, seeing that which Christ hath once offered retaines his vertue for euer; they by and by reply, the sacrifice offered in the Masse, is not another, but the same. This is their solution. But how doth the Apostle here contradict it? Thus, the sacrifice which is offered and many times reiterated: although it be *the same*, is not effectually, nor sufficient for the purgation of sinnes. Let the Papists now crie a thousand times if they will, that the sacrifice which they offer euery day, is the same sacrifice which Christ hath once made vpon the Crosse, and none other: I will alwaies maintaine against them by the mouth of the Apostle, that if the oblation of Christ had this vertue to appease God, then this his sacrifice hath not onely put an end to other oblations, but also that it is vnlawfull to reiterate the same: whereby we see, that it is an execrable sacriledge, to offer Christ in the Masse.

An obiection of the Papists answered, wherein they say they offer not another sacrifice, but the same which Christ offered.

Verf. 3.

But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance, &c.] Seeing the Gospell is the ambassage of our reconciliation with God, it is yet necessarie that the remembrance againe of sinnes should be made alwaies amongst vs euen at this day: but the Apostle signifieth that when sinnes are *remembered*, it is to the end the condemnation of them might be taken away, by the remedie of the sacrifice presently offered: he meanes not euery remembrance then, but that which bringeth such a confession of faultes, and of the condemnation which they deserue before God, that it should be needfull to haue a sacrifice, to procure a remedie. Such is the sacrifice of the

the Masse amongst the Papists. For they forge that the grace of the death of Christ is there applied vnto vs, that our sins might be done away. But if the Apostle rightly collecteth that the sacrifices of the law were weake, because they were reiterated euery yeere to obtaine pardon: truly then a man may gather by the same reason that the sacrifice of the death of Christ was weake, if it must bee celebrated euery day, to the end the vertue of it may be applied vnto vs. Let them paint out their Masse then with what colours soeuer they will, yet shall they not bee able to auoide this fault, to wit, that in the same their sacrifice, they blaspheme, and offer wicked outrage vnto Christ.

For it is impossible that the blood of goates, &c.] He confirmeth the former sentence by the same reason which he alleged heretofore, to wit, that the blood of beasts did not purge mens soules. True it is, the Iewes had therein a signe, and pledge of their true purgation, but it was another way: to wit, because the blood of a calfe signified the blood of Christ. But here the Apostle disputes of the value of the blood of beasts in it selfe: and therefore he doth rightly take away from them the vertue of purging. We are here then to vnderstand a close opposition, which is not expresse: as if hee had said, It is no marueile if the ancient sacrifices were weake and feeble, so as there was necessitie they should bee offered without ceasing: for there was nothing in them but the blood of beasts, which pearced not vnto the soule: but the blood of Christ is a farre other thing. We must not therefore measure the oblation which hee made, according to those oblations which went before.

5 *Wherefore when he commeth into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not: but a body hast thou ordained me.* Psal. 40. 9.

6 *In burnt offrings and sinne offrings thou hast had no pleasure.*

7 *Then said I, Lo, I come in the beginning of the booke it is written of me that I should doe thy will, O God.*

8 *Above*

8 *Above, when he said, Sacrifice and offering, and burnt offrings, and sinne offrings, thou wouldest not haue, neither badst pleasure therein (which are offered by the law.)*

9 *Then said I, Loe, I come to doe thy Will, O God: he taketh away the first that he may establishe the second.*

10 *By the which Will wee are sanctified, euen by the offering of the bodie of Christ once made.*

Verf. 5.

W *Herefore when he commeth, &c.]* This entrance into the world was the manifestation of Christ in the flesh. For when hee clothed himselfe with our humane nature, that hee might shew himselfe the Redeemer of the world, and appeared vnto men: then it is said that he entred into the world, as elswhere it is said, he descended from heauen. But it may seeme the Apostle doth here misalleage this 40. Psalme, in applying of it to Christ. For that which is there said, Mine iniquities haue taken hold vpon me, can no way agree to the person of Christ: vnlesse it be said that Christ of his owne will chargeth vpon himselfe the vices of his members. Truly the whole argument of the Psalme belongs properly vnto *Dauid*: but because it is well knowne that *Dauid* was a figure of Christ, there is no inconuenience if we transport that ouer vnto Christ which is there said of the person of *Dauid*: and specially where hee mentioneth the abolishing of the sacrifices of the law, as in this place now alleaged. And yet all doe not agree that the sense of the words are so. For they thinke the sacrifices are not here simply reiected, but that the superstitious opinion of them which then reigned, is refuted: because they commonly placed the whole seruice of God in them. But if it be so, then this testimonie should serue little to the present purpose. Therefore it is needfull that wee examine this place more narrowly, that wee may vnderstand whether the Apostle hath rightly alleaged it yea or no. These sentences, That God is not delighted with sacrifices; that he requires them not, that they are of no value, yea euen an abomination vnto him: are often met withall in the bookes of the

Pro-

Prophets. But there the fault which was in the sacrifices by accident is noted, and not any fault which was in them of their owne nature. For whereas hypocrites, who are otherwise obstinate in their vngodlines, would appease God by sacrifices, it was expedient they should be thus reprocued. The Prophets therefore reiect the sacrifices, not as they were ordained of God, but in regard that men of a wicked life did corrupt and prophane them by their naughtie consciences.

Now in this place the case is otherwise. For he condemnes not the sacrifices offered in hypocrisie, or which were not performed as they ought to haue been, for want of other duties, in regard of the frowardnes and malice of men: but he denieth that they are required of the faithfull and true seruants of God. For hee speakes of himselfe, who offered them with a pure heart, and innocent hands: and yet notwithstanding he saith that God had no pleasure in them. If it bee objected, that they are not acceptable to God of *Obiection.* themselues, or for their owne worthinesse, but for another end: I say againe, that this replie is from the purpose. For *Answer.* when men attribute more to externall ceremonies than they should, then are they to be brought backe to the spirituall seruice: and then the holy Spirit pronounceth that the ceremonies are nothing esteemed of God, when as by the error of men they are prized aboue measure. Questionlesse it had been a great fault in *Dauid* if he had despised the custome of sacrifices, seeing hee was subiect to the law. I confesse it was his dutie to serue God with the inward affection of his heart, and with a pure zeale: but yet it was not lawfull for him for all that to omit that which God had commanded him. But he was inioyned to sacrifice, as well as any other. Thus wee gather then that hee looked further than to the estate of his owne time, when hee said *that God would bane no sacrifice.* It is very certaine that euen in *Danids* time, this had place in part, to wit, that God cared not for sacrifices: but because they were all as yet held vnder the yoke of Tutorship, *Dauid* could not render any pure seruice vnto God,

God, vnlesse it were, as you would say, covered with this forme. It is necessarie then that we come to the kingdome of Christ, before this be perfectly accomplished in al points, to wit, that God required *no sacrifices*. There is such another place in the 16. Psalme, vers. 10. Thou wilt not suffer thine holy one to see corruption. For albeit God should haue deliuered *Dauid* from corruption as touching himselfe, yet this was truly and onely fulfilled in Christ. There is great weight then in this speech, when he promiseth *that he will do the will of God*, for he leaues no place for the sacrifices. From hence then we gather, that he ceaseth not to obey God perfectly, although hee vse no sacrifices: which yet could not be true, till after the abolishing of the law. I denie not but *Dauid* as well in this place, as in the 51. Psalme, ver. 18. doth not so lessen the estimation of the externall sacrifices, but that he still preferred that which was principall: and yet we must not doubt but he stretched his sight to the kingdome of Christ in both places. The Apostle then witnesseth that Christ is rightly brought in speaking in this Psalme: where amongst the Commandements of God, the sacrifices which God so streightly required vnder the law, are not set in the last place.

But a bodie hast thou ordained me.] The words of *Dauid* doe signifie another thing: for in the Psalme it is, Thou hast pearced mine eares. Which manner of speech some thinke to bee drawne from an ancient custome of the law. For if there were any which made none account of being set free at the Iubile, but would subiect himselfe to perpetuall bondage, his eare was to be pearced with an aule, Exod. 21.6. This is the sense then after their opinion; Lord, I am thy seruant for euer. Notwithstanding I take it otherwise: to wit, that he yeelds himselfe teachable and obedient. For we are deafe, till God haue opened our eares: that is to say, till he hath corrected the dulnes and obstinacie which is rooted in vs. And yet there is a close antithesis betweene the rude and ignorant people (to whom the sacrifices were as shadowes or remembrances without vertue) and *Dauid*, to whom

whom God had more liuely reuealed the lawfull and spiritual vse of the same. Now the Apostle following y^e Greekes saith, A bodie hast thou ordained me. For the Apostles were not so scrupulous to recite the very words; provided that they alwaies kept themselves from abusing the Scriptures falsely to their own aduantage. We must alwaies weigh and consider to what end they alleaged testimonies. For as touching the drift and scope of the place, they were warie not to draw the Scriptures by violence to a wrong sense: but as touching the words and other things which concerne not the matter they entreate of, they giue themselves great libertie.

In the beginning of the booke, &c.] The Hebrew word properly signifies a roule. For we know that the bookes in olde time were folded vp after the manner of a roll. Now there is no inconuenience, if by this *booke* we vnderstand the law, which prescribes the rule of holy life to all the children of God. Although another exposition seemes more true and proper: to wit, that he confesseth himselfe to be of the number of those who yeild themselves obedient vnto God. I graunt that the law commands all of vs to obey God: But *David* meanes that he is numbred among those who are called to obey God. And after, he protests that he obeyed this vocation, when he saith, *I desired to doe thy will.* Which specially agrees vnto Christ. For although all the faithfull do aspire to the righteousness of God, yet there is none but Christ which may be said to be wholly addicted to doe the will of God. And yet notwithstanding this place ought to kindle in vs a readinesse to obey. For, for this cause Christ is set before vs, as the patterne of perfect obedience, to the end that all which are his, should inforce themselves to follow his steppes, struiuing who can be formost: yea that they altogether with one consent may answer the calling of god, as also in their whole life to giue approbation that these words, *Loe I come,* are truly fulfilled in them. To the same purpose also is that to be referred which followeth: *It is written of me that I should doe thy will, O God.* As it is said elsewhere,

where, that the end of our election is, to be holy and without blame before him. Eph. 1. 4.

Verf. 9.

He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.] Here you see why and to what purpose this place is alleadged: to wit, to the ende we might know, that the full and perfect righteousness vnder the kingdome of Christ, hath no neede of the sacrifices of the law. For the will of God, as touching the rule of perfection, is established, though *they be taken away*. It followes then, that since the sacrifice of Christ is come, the sacrifices of beasts ought to cease; seeing they haue nothing in comon with him. For (as we haue said) *Dauid* in this place had no occasion to reiect the sacrifices for any fault comming from them: seeing he bends not his speech against hypocrites, neither reprooues he the superstitious abuse of Gods worshippe and seruice therein; but denies that the vse of sacrifices should be required of a faithful man, which was taught in holinesse: testifying that such a one may perfectly obey God without them.

Verf. 10.

By which will we are sanctified.] Hauing applied the place of *Dauid* to his purpose, hee now by occasion turnes some words to his profit: rather to deck and beautifie the matter withall, than precisely to follow the exposition of the said place. *Dauid* protests, not so much in his owne person, as in the person of Christ, that he is ready to doe the will of God. This extends it selfe to all the members of Christ. For the doctrine of *S. Paul* is generall, where he saith, This is the will of God, euē your sanctification, that euery one of you should abstaine from vncleannesse. 1. Thess. 4. 3. But because the example of this obedience was in Christ farre more excellent than in any other, principally by taking vpon him the forme of a seruant, and then in presenting himselfe to the death of the crosse: for this cause the Apostle saith, that Christ hath satisfied the commandement of his father, in offering himselfe a sacrifice; and that we by this meanes haue beene sanctified.

When he saith *by the offering of the bodie of Iesus Christ*, he alludes to that part of the Psalm, A bodie hast thou ordained

ned me, at the least it is so in the Greeke. And thus he signifies that Christ found sufficient matter in himselfe where- with to appease his father: so as he needed no supplies from any other. For if the Leviticall priest had had a fitte bodie, the sacrifices of beasts had beene superfluous. But Christ alone sufficeth, and of himselfe is sufficient to fulfill whatsoever God requireth,

Christ alone is sufficient to fulfill whatsoever God requires.

11 And every Priest standeth daily ministering, and oft times offereth one manner of offering, which can neuer take away sinnes.

12 But this man after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, sitteth for ever at the right hand of God,

13 And from henceforth carrieth, till his enemies be made his footestool.

*Psal. 110. 2.
1. Cor. 15. 25.*

14 For with one offering hath he consecrated for ever them that are sanctified.

15 For the holy Ghost also beareth vs record: for after that he had said before,

16 This is the Testament that I will make unto them after those daies, saith the Lord, I will put my lawes in their hearts, and in their mindes I will write them.

Ier. 31. 33.

17 And I will remember their sinnes and iniquities no more.

18 Now where remission of these things is, there is no more offering for sinne.

And every Priest, &c.] The conclusion of the whole disputation is, that the custome of offering every day is wholly disagreeing & contrarie to the Priesthood of Christ. And that for this cause since his coming, both the office of the Leviticall Priests, as also the manner and custome of offering every day, is ended. For the nature of things repugnant is such, that when the one is established, the other falls downe. Hitherto hee hath very sufficiently debated the question, touching the establishing of the Priesthood of Christ: it remaines then that the old Priesthood doe cease,

Ver. 11.

Vers. 14.

which agreeth not with Christ. For all the faithfull haue a full and absolute consecration in his onely oblation. Although we may expound the Greeke word, *He hath finished, or perfected*, yet I had rather say *He hath consecrated*: because the question is now touching the things which concerne the service of God. When he saith, *those which are sanctified*, vnder this word he comprehends all the children of God: and admonisheth vs therein that wee lose time to seeke the grace of our sanctification any where els.

Vers. 12.

But least men should make themselves beleue that Christ is now idle in heauen, he saith againe *that he is set at the right hand of the Father*. By which manner of speech (as we haue seene elsewhere) is signified rule and power. And therefore wee haue no neede to feare that hee will suffer the vertue of his death to decay or be quenched, or that he will suffer it to lie idly buried: he, I say, who for this cause is liuing to the end he may fill heauen and earth with his vertue. Moreouer, hee admonisheth vs by the wordes of this Psalme, how long this estate or condition must endure: to wit, till such time as Christ hath wholly subdued all his enemies. Wherefore if our faith seeke Christ sitting at the right hand of God, and content it selfe that he is set there, we shall in the end enioy the fruite of this victorie: wee shall, I say, triumph with our head, being vncllothed of the corruption of our flesh, after that our enemies, Satan, Sinne, Death, and the whole world shall be troden vnder our feete.

Verse 13.

Vers. 15.

For the holy Ghost also beareth witnes, &c.] It is not superfluous or causelesse that he brings in this testimonie of *Ieremie* the second time. Heretofore hee alleaged it to another end: to wit, to shew that it was necessary the old Testament should be abolished, in regard a new was promised, that it might correct the weaknes of the old. But now hee aimes at another thing. For hee onely grounds himselfe, and stands vpon this speech, *Their sinnes, and their iniquities will I remember no more*: and thereof gathers, that there is no more vse left for sacrifices, seeing that sinnes are done away. It may seeme this consequence is not very firme. For howsoeuer

heretofore there were innumerable promises of the remission of sinnes in the Law, and in the Prophets; yet notwithstanding the Church ceased not for all that to offer sacrifices still for themselves: and therefore remission of sinnes excludes not sacrifices. But if we doe yet more neerely consider of euery point; the Fathers had also the same promises of remission of sins vnder the law that we now haue: and resting their faith vpon the, did call vpon God, and reioyced that they obtained pardon. And yet notwithstanding all this, the Prophet as if he spake of some new thing not yet heard of, saith, that there shall be no more remembrance of sinnes before God, vnder the new Couenant. From this we gather, that sinnes are now pardoned after another manner than they were in old time. But this diuersitie consists neither in the word, nor in faith, but in the ransome of the remission.

God now then no more remembers sinnes and iniquities, because the purgation hath been made for all, *once*. For otherwise the Prophet hath affirmed in vaine, that it should be a benefit, and grace of the new Testament, That God would remember our sinnes no more. Furthermore, seeing wee are come to the end of the disputation which is here handled touching the Priesthood of Christ; the readers are to be aduertised in few words, that the inuention of the Papists touching the sacrifice of the Masse, is no lesse refuted in this place, than the sacrifices of the law are hereby abolished. They maintaine that their Masse is a sacrifice to doe away the sinnes both of the quicke and the dead: The Apostle on the contrarie saith, that euen this sacrifice of Christ ought not to be reiterated of any: neither doth he only say that this sacrifice of Christ is *one*, but also that it was offered *once*. Adde hereunto that he often attributes to Christ alone the honour of the Priesthood, so as none is sufficient or meete to offer Christ, but Christ himselfe onely. They haue yet an euasion, when they call it an vnbloodie sacrifice: but the Apostle without exception affirms, that to make a sacrifice, death is required. Moreouer, the Papists haue yet another shift, when they reple that the Masse is an applying

None fit to offer Christ but himselfe.

*Four maine
reasons prouing
the Masse to be
full of sacrile-
dge.*

of the onely sacrifice once done. But the Apostle teacheth on the contrary, that the causes why the sacrifices of the law were abolished by the death of Christ, was because that in them men remembred sinnes. Whence it appeares that this kinde of applying which they haue forged, is ceased. In a word, let the Papists turne them on which side they list, yet shal they neuer be able to auoide it, but that the present disputation of the Apostle doth still openly discover that their Masse is full of sacriledge.

- 1 For first of al the Apostle is witnes, that there was no man which was sufficient to offer Christ, but himselfe onely, and in the Masse hee is offered by the hands of another.
- 2 Secondly, the Apostle not onely maintaines that Christ his sacrifice is but *one*, but also that it was but *once* done, so as it is vnlawfull to reiterate the same: In the Masse, although they buzze that it is the same sacrifice, yet notwithstanding it appeares that they doe it euery day; and themselues confesse it.
- 3 Thirdly, the Apostle alloweth no sacrifice without blood, and death: they babble in vaine then that the sacrifice which they offer is vnbloodie.
- 4 Fourthly, when the question is of the obtaining pardon for our offences, the Apostle commaunds vs to haue our recourse to this *onely* sacrifice which Christ *once* offered vpon the crosse: and discernes vs from the Fathers by this marke, that the manner of often sacrificing is abolished by the comming of Christ: The Papists to the end that Christ his death may be fruitfull and profitable vnto vs, require daily applyings which is done by sacrifice: and thus Iewes and Christians should differ in nothing one from another, but in the externall signe.

19 Seeing therefore brethren, that by the blood of Iesus we may be hold to enter into the holy place,

20 By the new and liuing Way, which he hath prepared for vs, through the vaile, which is his flesh:

21 And seeing wee haue an hie Priest, which is ouer the house of God,

22 Let vs draw neere with a true hart in assurance of faith, our hearts being pure from an euill conscience,

23 And

23 *And washed in our bodies with pure water, let vs keep the profession of our hope without waivering (for he is faithfull which hath promised)*

Seeing then brethren, &c.] He gathers his former doctrine Verse 19. into a conclusion or summe: after which he addes an exhortation both to very good purpose, & of great weight, threatning them seuerely which shall reiect the grace of Christ. Now the summe is, that all the ceremonies by which men had accesse into the Sanctuarie of God vnder the law, had their firme truth in Christ: so as the vse of them is superfluous and vnprofitable to him that enioyeth Christ. Now the better to expresse this, hee describes the accesse which Christ giues vs by an allegorie. For he compares heauen to the old Sanctuarie, and vnder a figuratiue manner of speech sets foorth the things which were spiritually fulfilled in Christ. True it is that Allegories do sometimes rather darken, than illustrate the matter: but here they haue not a little grace; and besides, they bring much more light, when the Apostle transfers the old figures of the law to Christ: to the end we should know that all things which were shadowed in the law, are now truly manifested in him. Now as there is almost no word here that hath not his weight, so let vs remember that there is also a close antithesis, shewing that the truth which is scene in Christ must needs abolish the ancient figures.

First he saith, *that we haue libertie to enter into the holy places.*] This priuiledge was neuer giuen to the Fathers vnder the law. For it was forbidden the people to enter into the visible Sanctuarie: vnlesse the high Priest bare the names of the twelue tribes vpon his shoulders, and twelue precious stones vpon his breast, for a remembrance of all the people. But now it is farre otherwise. For wee haue entrance into heauen, not by figure onely, but in very truth by the meanes of Christ: because he hath made vs royall Priests, 1. Pet. 2. 9. He saith by *the blood of Iesus*: because that when the high Priest entred euery yeere, the doore of the Sanctuarie was

*The difference
betweene the
blood of beasts
and the blood
of Christ.*

not opened till blood came betweene. But he sheweth anon after what difference there is betweene this blood of Christ and the blood of beasts. For seeing the blood of beasts corrupted by and by, it could not long keepe his strength: but the blood of Christ, which cannot bee corrupt by any putrification, but runneth and holds alwaies his liuely colour, shall suffice vs to the end of the world. We neede not marueile then if so be the sacrifices of slaine beasts had no power to quicken, seeing they were dead things: but Christ being risen from death to giue life to vs, causeth his life to flow out into vs, to make vs partakers thereof. And this is the perpetuall consecrating of the way, which the blood of Christ, as you would say, doth alwaies distill before the face of his father to sprinkle both heauen and earth.

Verf. 20.

*No man shall
euer find God,
but he to whom
the man Christ
is both the way
and doore.*

By the vaile.] As the vaile couered the secret things of the Sanctuarie, and yet opened the entrance to come into it; so also although the Godhead was hidden in the flesh of Christ, yet neuerthelesse it brings vs vnto heauen: neither shal any man euer be able to finde God, vnlesse he to whom the man Christ shall be the way and the doore. Hereby we are admonished, that the glorie of Christ ought not to bee esteemed of vs according to the outward forme of the flesh: and on the other side also, that we must not despise his flesh, by reason that it is as a vaile which couers, and keepes the maiestie of God hid as it were: seeing also that euen the same leades vs to the enioying of all the benefits of God.

Verf. 21.

And seeing wee haue a great hie Priest.] Now we must call to minde all that which he hath spoken before of the abrogation of the old Priesthood. For Christ can no otherwise be a Priest, but by the deposing of these first Priests from their office, because it was of another order. His meaning is then that wee must giue ouer and abandon all these things which Christ hath changed by his comming. And he expressly establissheth him *ouer the house of God*: to the end all they which would haue place in the Church, should submit themselves to Christ, and chuse him for their leader and gouernour, him (I say) without any other.

Let vs draw neere then, &c.] Having shewed that there is Ver. 22.
nothing in Christ, nor in his sacrifice, which is not spirituall
and heauenly: so would he also, that that which we do bring
with vs, should be answerable thereunto. The Iewes purged
themselves in old time with diuers washings, to the ende
they might prepare themselves for the seruice of God. We
are not to wonder if the manner of their clensings were car-
nall, seeing the seruice of God it selfe beeing inwrapped
with shadows, smelled something as yet of that which was
carnall: for they chose a mortall man to be Priest from a-
mongst sinners, who was to performe the seruice to God
for a time. He was indeed cloathed & adorned with a cost-
ly garment, but yet such a one as was of this world: when he
was to present himselfe before the face of God, he came on-
ly to the Arke of the couenant: and to sanctifie his entrance,
he borrowed his sacrifice from amongst a flocke of brute
beasts. But in Christ all things are much more excellent. For
he is not onely pure and innocent, but the very wel-spring
of all holinesse, and righteousnesse, is ordained a Priest by a
diuine Oracle: not for a short space in this mortall life, but
for euer. An oath is put betweene, for a confirmation: he
comes to doe his office, being adorned with the holy Ghost
in most ample and full perfection: he restoreth God fauou-
rable againe by his blood, and reconciles him with men: he
ascends farre aboue all heauens, to the ende he might ap-
peare a Mediatour for vs before God. Wherefore we are to
bring nothing on our part which should not be correspon-
dent: because there ought to be a mutuall agreement be-
tweene the Priest, and the people: and therefore, let all ex-
ternall washings of the flesh bee laid downe, and let all this
pompe, and all this ceremonial furniture cease. For as oppo-
site to these externall figures, the Apostle sets *a true heart,*
and assurance of faith, and the clensing from all vices. And
from hence we gather how we must be prepared, to the end
we may inioy the benefits of Christ. For no man comes to
him, but with a sound, or true heart, a certaine faith, and a
pure conscience. Now he opposeth a true, or vpright heart,

Vers. 23.

to a fained, and a double heart. In this word *assurance*, he shewes what the nature of faith is: and withall admonisheth vs that the grace of Christ cannot be receiued, but of those which bring with them an assured and certaine perswasion.

He calles it the *clensing of the heart from an euill conscience*, either when we are accounted pure before God, hauing obtained remission of sinnes; or, when the heart purged from euill affections, pricketh vs no more forward with the pro-uocations of the flesh. For mine owne part I am content vnder this word, to comprehend both the one and the other. That which followes of the *body washed with pure water*, many take it for Baptisme: but it seemes more probable to me, that the Apostle alludes to the auncient ceremonies of the law: so as by this word *water*, he signifies the holy spirit, as Ezech. 36.25. speakes, saying, I will poure cleane water vpon you, &c. Now the summe of the whole matter is this, that we are partakers of Christ, if beeing sanctified in bodie, and in soule, we come to him: besides, that this sanctification is an assured faith, a pure conscience, and a cleanness both of bodie, and soule, which proceedeth from the holy Ghost, and is accomplished by him: and not a sanctification which consists in an outward pompe of ceremonies. To the same purpose S. Paul exhorts the faithfull to purge themselves from all filthinesse of the flesh, and spirit, seeing God hath adopted them for his children. 2. Cor. 7. 1.

As hope springs
out of faith, so
doth it also
nourish the
same.

Let vs keepe the profession, &c.] Because he here exhorts the Iewes to perseuerance, he calles it *hope*, rather than faith. For euen as hope springs out of faith, so also it nourisheth faith, and maintaines it vnto the end. Furthermore he requires *confession*: because it is no true faith, if it shew not it selfe forth before men. And it seemes he doth priuily reprocue the dissimulation of those, who to get fauour of their nation, were too scrupulous in the obseruation of the ceremonies of the law. He would not haue them to belceue with the heart alone then, but also to shewe by effects in what honor and estimation they had Christ. Further, we are diligently to note the reason which he by and by addeth, to wit, *that god*
who

who hath promised, is faithfull. For first of all by this wee are taught, that the stay of our faith rests vpon this foundation, That God is faithfull. Now this truth consists in the promise. For before we belecue, it is required that Gods voice goe before. Secondly, we are taught, that euery voice or word of God is not fitte to beget faith in vs: for faith findes no footing, nor rest, but in the promise onely. And from this place we gather also, that there is a relation and mutuall correspondence betweene the faith of men, and the promises of God: for if God promise not, who can belecue?

2
The promise of
God, the onely
object of faith.

24 And let vs consider one another, to prouoke vnto loue, and to good workes.

25 Not forsaking the fellowship that wee haue among our selues, as the manner of some is: but let vs exhort one another, and that so much the more, because yee see the day draweth neere.

26 For if we sinne willingly after that we haue receiued and acknowledged the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sinnes,

27 But a fearefull looking for of iudgement, and violent fire, which shall denoure the aduersaries.

And let vs consider one another. ¶ I doubt not but he speaks Vers. 24. particularly to the Iewes, and specially directs this his exhortation to them. We know well how great the arrogancie and pride of this nation was. For in regard they were of the stock and linage of Abraham, they so gloried therein, as if they onely were receiued into the couenant of eternal life; and therefore reiected all others. And thus beeing puffed vp with such a prerogative, and despising all people in regard of themselues, they onely would haue the estimation to be the Church of God: and which more is, they proudly attributed vnto themselues the title of the Church, as being onely proper vnto them. Now to correct this their pride, the Apostles were constrained to take so much the more pains. And in mine opinion, the Apostles drift here is, that the Iewes,

Vers. 23.

to a fained, and a double heart. In this word *assurance*, he shewes what the nature of faith is: and withall admonisheth vs that the grace of Christ cannot be receiued, but of those which bring with them an assured and certaine perswasion.

He calles it the *cleansing of the heart from an euill conscience*, either when we are accounted pure before God, hauing obtained remission of sinnes; or, when the heart purged from euill affections, pricketh vs no more forward with the pro-uocations of the flesh. For mine owne part I am content vnder this word, to comprehend both the one and the other. That which followes of the *body washed with pure water*, many take it for Baptisme: but it seemes more probable to me, that the Apostle alludes to the auncient ceremonies of the law: so as by this word *water*, he signifies the holy spirit, as Ezech. 36. 25. speakes, saying, I will poure cleane water vpon you, &c. Now the summe of the whole matter is this, that we are partakers of Christ, if beeing sanctified in bodie, and in soule, we come to him: besides, that this sanctification is an assured faith, a pure conscience, and a cleannesse both of bodie, and soule, which proceedeth from the holy Ghost, and is accomplished by him: and not a sanctification which consists in an outward pompe of ceremonies. To the same purpose S. Paul exhorts the faithfull to purge themselues from all filthinesse of the flesh, and spirit, seeing God hath adopted them for his children. 2. Cor. 7. 1.

*As hope springs
out of faith, so
doth it also
nourish the
same.*

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Iewes.

Verf. 24.

Iewes should not bee displeased to see the Gentiles made partakers with them, and to bee vnited with them into the same bodie of the Church. Now in the first place he saith, *Let vs consider one another:* for the God gathered his Church both of Iewes and Gentiles, amongst whom in former time there had been alwaies great discord, so as this Societie was as if one would haue made fire and water to haue agreed together. And therefore the Iewes withdrew and separated themselues, thinking it an vnreasonable thing, that the Gentiles shuld be compared with the. Against this peruerse *promocation* of enuie which pricked them forward, the Apostle sets a contrarie *promocation*, to wit, *of loue*: for the Greeke word which he vseth, signifies an earnestnes of contention. To the end then that the Iewes who were inflamed with enuie, should not enter into combat against the Gentiles, he exhorts them to an holy emulation: to wit, that they should stirre vp and prouoke one another to loue. That which by & by after followeth, confirms this exposition: *Not forsaking* (saith hee) *the fellowship*, or our assembling. The composition of the Greeke word is to be noted, which signifies not simply an assemblie, or a congregation, but a congregation augmented with new encreasing. The wall being then broken downe, God assembled those together which had bin strangers from the Church, to knit them vnto his children, Ephes. 2. 14. Thus the Gentiles were a new and vnwonted encreasing of the Church. The Iewes tooke this as a great dishonour to them, so as many among them revolted from the Church; thinking they had sufficient occasion so to doe, because of such a mingling of the Gentiles with them. For they could not easily bee perswaded that they ought to lose their prerogatiue. Why so? they thought that the right of adoption belonged to them properly and particularly. The Apostle then admonisheth them that they should not bee stirred vp to forsake the Church because of this equalitie: and to the end they might not thinke that he admonisheth them without cause, he giues them to wit, that it is a common vice whereof they were guiltie. We now vnderstand

derstand what the Apostles meaning is, and what necessitie there was that constrained him to make this exhortation. Yet we must from hence gather a generall doctrine. For this disease raignes euery where among men, to wit, that euery man is readie to preferre himselfe before his brother, but especially those who seeme to haue somewhat in them more excellent than others, can hardly indure that their inferiours should be made their equals. Moreover there is almost in al of vs such emulation, that euery one would willingly make Churches apart, if it were possible: why? because it is hard to apply a mans selfe to the manners of others. The rich they enuie one another. And scarcely shall you finde one among an hundred that would bestow so much as the naming of one of their poore brethren, much lesse to esteeme them as brethren, were it not that they are drawne vnto it either by some likenesse and agreement in manners, or by other allurements of outward profit and commoditie: otherwise it is more than difficult to nourish amongst vs this perpetuall concord.

It is very difficult to nourish and conserue the band of loue and amitie among brethren.

Wherefore this admonition is exceeding needfull euen for vs, to the end we may be stirred vp and prouoked thereby to loue, rather than to enuie, and that we separate not our selues from them with whom God hath coupled vs, but that we loue all those with a brotherly affection, who are vnited with vs by one consent of faith. And in very trueth, by how much the more Satan watcheth by all meanes to plucke vs out of the Church, or craftely, and as it were by stealth, to withdraw vs from the same: so much the more ought we to be carefull to seeke, and to loue vnitie. And this we shall doe when none of vs takes libertie to please himselfe, more than he ought, but rather all of vs ayming at this marke, euen to prouoke one another to loue: and that there be no other emulation amongst vs, but to exceede one another in good works. For certainly the contempt of our brethren, our peeuishnesse, enuie; the ouer excessiue loue and estimation of our selues, and all other wayeward prouocations, doe sufficiently testifie both to our selues and others, that

A meanes to preserve vnitie:

*Those in whom
God hath
wrought the
worke of con-
uersion, ought
by all meanes
to procure the
conuersion of
others.
Vers. 25.
The chiefe
causes of all
schismes.*

that either there is no charitie at all in vs, or at the least that it is very cold. Now hauing said, that we should not forsake the assemblie, he addes, *But admonish one another*: hereby signifying that all the faithfull ought to adde vnto the Church from all parts, and that by all meanes possible that is within their power. For we are called of the Lord vpon this condition, that our selues being conuerted, we forthwith endeavour to conuert others: to bring those into the right way that haue strayed out of it: to helpe those vp which are fallen; and to winne those who are yet without. Now if wee ought to employ so much labour about those who are yet strangers from the flocke of Christ, how much more paines and diligence is there required to bee in vs, in admonishing our brethren with whom God hath knit vs?

As the manner of some is.] It appeares by this, that the proud contempt of others, and the pleasing of our selues more than there is cause, hath been the chiefe fountaine of al schismes and diuisions. But seeing we heare, y there were disloyall persons heretofore euen in the time of the Apostles, who rent themselues from the Church, we ought to be the lesse moued or troubled with such examples of Apostasies and turnings backe which we see now at this day. True it is, that no small offence comes by it, to wit, when those who haue shewed some signe of the feare of God, and haue made some profession of the selfe same faith with vs, shall reuolt and turne away from the liuing God: but because it is no new thing, wee ought to be so much the lesse moued therewithall, as I haue said. You see then that the Apostle hath intermingled this member, to shew that hee speaks not without good cause; but to the end hee might bring them a necessarie remedie for such a maladie as had too much ouerrunne them.

And that so much the more, because you see the day draweth neere.] Some think this place agrees with that which S. Paul saith in the 13. to the Romanes, vers. 11. It is now time that we should arise from sleepe, for now is our saluation neerer than when we beleued it. But I rather thinke, he mentions the

the last comming of Christ, the expectation whereof ought to stirre vs vp wonderfully both to the care of an holy life, as also to be diligent to adde vnto the Church, by imploying our selues therein with a zealous affection. 2. Pet. 3. 11. For, for what cause should Christ come but to gather vs together in one, from out of that scattering in which now we erre? Ioh. 11. 52. Wherefore so much the more neere we see the day to approach vpon vs, so much the more ought we to strue that those who are scattered may bee brought home and vnited againe, to the end there may be but one sheeple-fold, and one shepheard, Ioh. 10. 16. If any shall demaund areason why the Apostle speaking to those who were as yet farre off from this reuelation of Christ, yet tels them that they saw the day neere at hand, and that they shuld so much the more hastily knit themselues againe together: I answer, that from the very beginning of the kingdome of Christ, the Church was so ordered, that the faithfull were to prepare themselues, as if the Iudge were to come by and by. Now it is certaine that they were not deceiued with a false imagination, when they prepared themselues almost euery moment to receiue Christ. For such hath been the estate of the Church since the publishing of the Gospell, that the whole time therof is truly and properly called the last time. Wherefore those who are dead long agoe, haue no lesse liued vnder the last daies than wee. Mock-gods, and scoffers laugh at vs because of our simplicitie; counting all that which wee beleeue touching the resurrection of the bodie, and of the last iudgement to be but a fable. But to the end they might not corrupt our faith by their iests, the holie Ghost first of all forewarnes vs of them, and withall admonisheth vs, that with the Lord a thousand yeeres is but as one day, 2. Pet. 3. 8. so as no time ought to seeme long vnto vs, as often as wee thinke of the eternitie of the heavenly kingdome. And further, that since Christ is come, hauing fulfilled all the parts of our saluation, and is ascended into heauen, it is good reason that being continually vpon our watch looking for this his second appearing, that we should

*The neerer
Christs com-
ming doth ap-
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ter should our
endeuour be to
bring home the
straied sheepe
vnto his fold.
Question.
Answer.*

The last day.

account

account of euery day as if it were the last.

For if we sinne willingly.] He shewes what a seuerer vengeance of God is neere to all those who reuolt from the grace of Christ: for being once deprived of that onely saluation, they are destinate alreadie as it were to certaine perdition.

*The error of
Nonatus.*

Nonatus with all his route armed themselves heretofore with this place, to take away all hope of pardon indifferently from all those which should fall into sin after baptisme. Those which were not able to refute his falsehood, thought it better not to giue credit to this Epistle, than to consent to

such an absurditie; but the true exposition of this place, although it should receiue no helpe from any other place but it selfe, will bee sufficient to repell the impudencie of *Nonatus*.

By this word, *if we sinne*, The Apostle meanes not those that sinne in this or in that regard, but those who hauing forsaken the Church, doe wholly estrange themselves from Christ. For he entreates not here of some particular kind of sinne, but expressely reproofes those who wittingly and willingly reiect the society of the Church. Now there

*Great difference
betweene
particular
faults, and a
generall apo-
stasie.*

is great difference betweene particular faults, and such a generall falling away, by which wee doe wholly cut our selues off from the grace of Christ. And because this can befall none but those who haue been alreadie enlightened, therefore the Apostle saith, *If we sinne willingly after we haue receiued the knowledge of the truth*: as if he should say, If wee doe wittingly and willingly reiect the grace which wee haue receiued. Now wee may see well how farre off this doctrine disagrees from the error of *Nonatus*: And that the Apostle here onely comprehends Apostataes, it doth evidently appeare by the deduction of the text. For it tends to shew, that those who were once receiued into the Church, should not forsake the same, as some were accustomed to doe. He saith, that there *remaines now no more sacrifice for sinnes*, for those who doe thus; because they willingly sinned after they had receiued and acknowledged that truth.

But yet Christ alwaies offereth himselfe to poore sinners which are fallen into some one kinde of sinne or other, so as they

they neede not seeke any other sacrifice to take and put away their sinnes. He saith then, that there remaines no more sacrifice for them, who turne away themselves from the death of Christ: which a man neuer comes to doe by one particular sinne; but when therewithall faith is wholly renounced. Now how soeuer this severity of God be fearefull and horrible, and is set forth to feare men, yet it cannot be accused of crueltie. For seeing the death of Christ is the only remedie by which we are deliuered from eternall death, those who endeauour as much as they can to abolish the same; with the vertue and benefit of it, doe they not deserue that despaire onely should be allotted for them? God doth alwaies draw them to reconciliation with him, who abide in Christ, they are sprinkled with his blood, their sinnes are alwaies blotted out by his perpetuall sacrifice. And if it be so, that we must not seek saluation out of him, let vs not wonder if all those who willingly forsake him, are deprived from all hope of pardon. So much signifies this word *no more*. For the sacrifice of Christ is auailable to the faithfull, euen to the very last breath, although they sinne often: and euen for this cause it is, that it alwaies holds his strength and vigour, because it cannot be auoided that they should not be subiect to sinne, as long as they dwell in the flesh. The Apostle speakes then of them onely, who wofully abandoning Christ, doe deprive themselves of the benefit of his death. This member, *After they haue acknowledged the truth:* is put to aggrauate their ingratitude. For he who willingly and of deliberate malice quencherh the light of God kindled in his heart, what excuse hat he, or can he alleadge for himselfe before God? Wherefore, let vs learne not onely with reuerence, and a readie teachablenesse to receiue the spirit of truth which is offered vs, but also constantly to perseuere in the knowledge of it, to the end this sharpe vengeance of the contempt thereof fall not vpon vs.

But a fearefull looking for of iudgement.] He meanes the torment of an euill conscience, which wicked contemners doe feeble within them, who as they neuer had any taste or feeling;

feeling of Gods grace in truth; so having once had it onely in shew, they doe feelee themselves wholly deprived of the same for euer by their owne default. Needes must such not onely feelee a pricking and biting within them, but they must also be tormented with wonderfull gnawings. From thence it comes, that they obstinately murmur against God, for they can in no wise beare so seuerer a Iudge. They endeauour with might and maine to put backe from them the feeling of Gods wrath, but all in vaine. For as soone as God hath granted them a little truce, yet bringing them by and by after perforce to his iudgement seate, he presseeth them with such torments as they flie from about all things in the world. He addes, *and violent fire*: signifying by this word violent, or raging, as I take it, a vehement, violent, and tempestuous heat. And in this word *fire*, there is a metaphor which is commonly known. For euen as the wicked doe now burne with the feare and terror of Gods wrath, so shall they then also be set on fire with the feeling of that which they now presently haue: I know well that the Sophisters do subtilly descant vpon this fire: but I rest not in their fancies; seeing it is most euident that it is the same manner of speech with that, where the Scripture coniointeth fire, with the worme. But no man doubts but that he names the worme by way of similitude, for that horrible torment of conscience, wherewith the wicked and vnfaithfull are gnawne, Eccles. 7. 19. *Isayah, 66. 24. Which shall deuoure the aduersaries.* It shall deuour, so as it shall destroy, and not consume: for it cannot be quenched. By meanes whereof he admonisheth vs, that those who haue refused to haue place amongst the faithfull, after it was once giuen them, are now numbred amongst the enemies of Christ. For there is no meane betweene both: they that reiect the Church must needs be wholly giuen vp to Satan.

28 *He that despiseth Moses law, dieth without mercie vnder two or three witnesses.*

29 *Of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall he bee worthy*

worthy of, which treadeth under foot the sonne of God, and counteth the blood of the Testament as an unholy thing, wherewith he was sanctified, and doth despite the spirit of grace.

30 For we know him that hath said vengeance belongeth vnto me: I will recompence saith the Lord. And againe, the Lord shall iudge his people.

31 It is a fearefull thing to fall into the hands of the liuing God.

HE that despiseth, &c.] This is an argument taken from the lesse to the greater. For if it were a crime worthy of death to violate the law of Moses, how much more punishment shall the reiection of the Gospel deserue, which is enwrapped with so many detestable sacriledges? This kind of argument therefore was most proper and fit to moue the Iewes withal. For so seuer a punishment against the Apostataes of the law, could not seeme new nor more rigorous than was resonable. And therefore they were to acknowledge the vengeance whereby God now established the maiestie of his Gospel, to be iust, how seuer soeuer it was. Furthermore, by this, that which I haue said heretofore is confirmed: to wit, that the Apostle disputes not concerning particular sinnes, but of an vtter renouncing of Christ. For the law it selfe did not punish all sorts of transgressions with death, but Apostasie: that is, when any one had wholly forsaken the religion. For the Apostle had an eie to that sentence which is in Deuteronomie, 17.2,3,4,5. If there be found among you in any of thy cities man or woman that hath wrought wickednes in the sight of the Lord thy God, in transgressing his couenant, to serue strange gods, thou shalt bring him out of thy gates, and shalt stone him with stones, till they die.

Now although the law came from God, and that *Moses* was not the author, but onely the minister of it: notwithstanding the Apostle calles it *Moses law*, because it was giuen by his hand. And he so speaks, to the end he might the more amplifie the dignitie of the Gospel, which came from the sonne of God.

Q

Vnder

Verse 28.

*None ought to
be condemned
but such as are
convinced by
witnesses.*

Vnder two or three witnesses.] This serues nothing to the present matter, but it is a part of *Moses* his policie, to witte, that two or three witnesses were required to conuince the offendour of his offence. Notwithstanding we gather more certainly of this, what crime the Apostle meant to note out vnto vs. For if this had not beene added, a doore had beene opened to many false coniectures. But now the matter is out of all question, that he speakes here of Apostasie. Yet wee must note herewithall this equitie which almost all Politiques haue followed: to wit, That none be condemned, till he be conuicted by witnesses.

Which treadeth vnder foote the Sonne of God.] This is common both to the Apostataes of the law and the Gospel: to wit, that both the one and the other doe perish without mercie: but the manner of their ruine is diuers. For the Apostle threatens not bodily death alone, to the contemners of Christ, but also eternall damnation. For this cause he saith, that these haue deserued a most grieuous torment. Now he sets forth the reuolt of Christians by three formes of speech. For he saith first, that by this meanes, *the sonne of God is troden vnder foote*: 2. that *his blood is counted a prophane thing*: 3. that *they despise the spirit of grace*. Now it is worse to tread vnder feete, than to despise: and the dignitie of Christ is far aboue the dignitie of *Moses*. And note also, that he doth not simply oppose the Gospel to the law, but the person of Christ, and of the holy Ghost, to the person of *Moses* onely. *And counteth the blood of the Testament as an unholy thing.* He aggravates this ingratitude, by making comparison of the benefits. Questionlesse it is a great villanie to prophane the blood of Christ, which is the matter of our sanctification. Now they doe it which reuolt from the faith: for the eie of our faith lookes not vpon the bare and naked doctrine, but to the blood by which our saluation is established. And therefore he calles it the blood of the Testament, because the promises thereof are then ratified and confirmed vnto vs, when this pledge of our redemption is added.

But he shewes what the meane of this ratification is, when

when he saith, *by which we are sanctified*: because the blood which Christ shed should nothing profit vs, if we were not sprinkled therewithall by the holy Ghost. From thence comes both our purgation, and holinesse. Notwithstanding he alludes to the auncient manner of sprinkling, which serued nothing at all to true sanctification, but was only a shadow or figure of it. *The spirit of grace.* He calles it the spirit of grace, because of the effect, for as much as by him and his vertue, we inioy that grace which is offered vs in Christ. For it is he that illuminates our vnderstandings by faith; which seales vp our adoption in our hearts; which regenerates vs into newnesse of life; which ingrafts vs into the body of Christ, to the ende hee may liue in vs, and wee in him. He is rightly then called the spirit of grace, seeing by him Christ with all his benefits is made ours. Now it is too great and wicked an impietie, to despise him, who bestows vpon vs so many, and so excellent benefits. From this we may gather, that all those who willingly doe cause the spirit of God to become vnprofitable vnto them, which once they receiued; doe thereby reuile and despise him. Therefore wee are not to wonder if God doe so seuerely punish such sacriledges: we must not maruell if he stoppe his eares to those which haue trode vnder foote Christ the Mediatour, who only obtaines for vs that which we neede: wee must not wonder if he shut vp the way of saluation to those who haue repulsed their only leader, which is the holy Ghost.

For we know him that hath said, vengeance belongeth vnto me, &c.] These two places are taken out of the 32. of Deut. 35. Now seeing *Moses* there promisseth that God will shew vengeance vpon them that haue wronged his people, it seemes that that which is there spoken of vengeance, is here improperly wrested to the matter in hand. For what should the Apostles drift now be? He saith that the impietie of those who haue mocked God, shall not goe unpunished. And *S. Paul* in the 12. to the Rom. 19. following the true meaning of this place of *Moses*, applies it to another ende. For exhorting vs to patience, he commands vs that we

*Four effects
which the holy
Ghost works in
vs.*

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- 2
- 3
- 4

giue place to God to take vengeance, because it is his office: and prooves it by this testimonie of *Moses*. But there is no inconuenience to transerre these particular sentences to a generall doctrine. Although then that *Moses* intent be to comfort the faithfull, shewing that God would auenge the wrongs done vnto them: yet one may alwaies gather from these words, that it is Gods proper and peculiar office to punish the wicked. And he who prooves by this place that the contempt of God shall not goe vnpunished, because he is a iust Iudge which reserues the office of reuenge vnto himselfe, doth not abuse the testimonie of *Moses* at all. Although it may well be also, that the Apostle drawes his argument from the lesse to the greater, thus: God promisetht that he will not suffer the wrongs done to his people to remaine vnpunished: and proteits that hee will not faile to take vengeance. If he punish the wrongs done to men, will he not reuenge himselfe vpon his owne? will he haue so litle care or respect to his owne glorie, that when iniurie and despite is offered vnto him, that he in the meane while will put it vp and make no account of it? But yet that which I haue said before, is more simple and lesse constrained: to wit, that the Apostle only shews that the contempt of God shal not goe scotte free, because it is his proper office to giue that to the wicked which they haue deserued.

Deut. 32. 36.

And againe, the Lord will iudge his people.] Of this also ariseth a like, or greater difficultie: because it seemes that the sense of *Moses* agrees not to this present purpose. It seems that the Apostle alleadgeth this place, as if *Moses* had put the word *to iudge*, for to punish. Now seeing *Moses* addes presently after by way of exposition, *hee will be mercifull towards his Saints*: it appeares by this, that this word *to iudge* is taken for the office of gouerning: the vse thereof being very frequent in the Hebrew tongue. And if it be so, then belike this serues not much to the present matter. But hee which shall consider the whole diligently, shall perceiue that this place also is fitly, and to very good purpose alleadged. For God cannot gouerne his Church but he must purge
it,

it, & put those things into good order which are confused. Wherefore, this gouernment ought of right to terrifie the hypocrites, who shall then be punished for domineering among the faithfull, and for their disloyaltie in abusing of the holy name of God, when the father of the familie shall take the charge of setting good order in his house. In this sense it is said, that God doth arise to iudge his people, but how? when he discernes the sincere from the hypocrites, Psal. 50. 1. and 125. 3. where the Prophet shewes how the hypocrites shall be rooted out, and shall no more be so bold to crake that they are the Church, because God suffered them to doe what they listed: hee also testifies that this iudgement beeing accomlishe d; peace shall be vpon Israel. The Apostle then speakes not from the purpose, when he admonisheth that God gouernes in his Church, and that he omits nothing which may any way serue to the right and good ordering of the same, to the ende that all may learne carefully to content themselues vnder his direction: and remembering that they must giue accounts to him as to their iudge.

From this he concludes, that *It is a fearefull thing to fall into the hands of the liuing God.*] For mortall man cannot exceede death, let him exercise his vengeance in the cruellest manner, and with the greatest furie and indignation that may be: but the power of God is not so straitly limited. Furthermore we oft deceiue men, but we cannot escape the iudgement of God. Wherefore whosoever shall seriously thinke that he hath to deale with God, it must necessarily follow, that such a one tremble and be astonished in good earnest, vnlesse he will shew himselfe to be exceeding senselesse: yea it cannot be that this feeling of Gods maiestie should not swallow a man vp wholly, so as no torments or sorrowes in the world may be compared thereunto. In a word, as often as our flesh tickleth and allures vs, or that we flatter our selues in any sort in our finnes, this admonition alone ought to be sufficient to awaken vs: to wit, that it is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the liuing God: whose

Verf. 31.

*Obiection.**Answer.*

whose wrath is armed with so many and so horrible punishments to eternall condemnation. Notwithstanding it may seeme that this sentence is contrary to that of *Dauid* where he saith, that it is better to fall into the hands of God, than into the hands of men, 2. Sam. 24. 14. But it shall be easie to resolue this question, if wee consider that *Dauid* hauing an assured confidence in the mercie of God, did rather chuse him for his Iudge, than men. For although hee knew that God was iustly displeased with him, yet hee had this confidence that he would bee pacified; because being humbled in himselfe, he ceased not still to bee sustained with the promise of grace. And therefore, seeing he set God before him as one inclined to pardon, and gracious to the prayers of his own; no marueile if he feared his wrath lesse, than the wrath of men. But in this place the Apostle pronounceth that the wrath of God is terrible to those who being destitute of all hope to obtaine pardon, look for nothing els but extreame vengeance, because they themselues haue alreadie shut vp the gate of Gods grace against themselues. Now we know that God is described in diuers manners, according to the qualitie of those to whom wee speake. And that is it which *Dauid* meanes in the 18. Psalme, vers. 26. With the louing thou wilt be louing, but with the froward thou wilt shew thy selfe froward.

32 Now call to minde the daies that are passed, in the which, after ye had receined light, ye endured a great fight in afflictions,

33 Partly while ye were made a gazing stock both by reproches and afflictions, and partly while ye became companions of them which were so tossed to and fro.

34 For both ye sorrowed with me for my bands, and suffered with ioy the spoyling of your goods, knowing in your selues how that you haue in heauen a better, and an enduring substance.

35 Cast not away therefore your confidence which hath great recompence of reward.

Now

NOW call to minde, &c.] To the end he might the more Verse 32.
 stirre them vp, and might giue them a cheerefull disposition of minde to perseuere, and continue constant, hee putteth them in minde of the testimonies, and good signes of the feare of God which they had shewed before. For it is a shame after wee haue well begun, to waxe wearie in the middle of our race: and yet a greater shame to recoyle, after we haue gone very farre forward on our iourney. For then the remembrance of our warfare in times past, shall be profitable vnto vs indeede, when for the present we behaue our selues faithfully and valiantly vnder the banner of our Captaine Christ; not as though it were an excuse sufficient to couer our sloth and idlenes withall, that wee are therefore discharged of present enduring the crosse, because wee haue borne it alreadie: but on the contrarie, our former conflicts which we haue suffered, should prepare vs with so much the more nimblenes and actiuenes, to finish our course which we haue yet to runne. For Christ hath not called vs vnder any such condition, that after a few yeeres wee should aske leaue to be gone, as souldiers which haue serued their time, but rather to the end wee should follow our monthly pay euen vnto the last stroke. Moreouer, hee amplifieth the exhortation, when he saith that they haue alreadie done very worthie and valiant acts, euen then when they were but learners: and therefore it were so much the greater shame for them, if they should now be discouraged, after they had been exercised therein by long vse. For this word *light*, is restrained to the time in the which they began first of all to giue themselves to the seruice of Christ. As if he should say, As soone as you began to receiue the faith of Christ, you endured sore and hard conflicts: now therefore long experience it selfe ought to haue confirmed you to be more courageous. And yet therewithall hee admonisheth them, that whereas they beleeued, it was by the grace of God, and not by any industrie of their owne. For they are said to be illuminate which were before plunged in darknes; and of such as had no eyes to see withall, vnlesse light did shine vnto them

them by another meanes. As often then as the troubles which we haue suffred for Christ shall come into our minds, let them bee so many goades in our sides to pricke vs forward to profit more and more.

Verf. 33.

Partly while ye were made, &c.] We see to what manner of persons he speaketh, to wit, to such whose faith had been tried by no small experiences: and yet he ceaseth not to exhort them to greater things. Wherefore let no man deceiue himselfe through false flatteries, as if hee were come to the goale, or had no more need to be stirred vp by others. Now he saith that they were *made gazing stocks by reproches, and afflictions*, as if they had bin brought vpon scaffolds. Whence wee may gather that the persecutions which they endured were great. But we must diligently obserue the other member where he saith, they were *made companions of the faithfull in their persecutions*. For seeing the cause for the which all the faithfull do suffer, is the cause of Christ, yea & the common cause of them all: therefore whatsoeuer one of them endures, the rest ought to beare the burthen with them, and to take it to heart as if they themselues did endure it. And truly thus wee must doe, vnlesse wee meane to separate our selues euen from Christ himselfe.

Verf. 34.

And suffered with ioy the spoyling of your goods.] It is not to be doubted but the losse of their goods was cause of sorrow and heauines vnto them: for questionlesse they were men subiect to humane affections: but their sorrow was so tempered that it hindred not this ioy whereof the Apostle speakes. For as pouertie is reputed among aduersities; so no doubt the spoiling of their goods, considered in it selfe, was cause of sorrow and griefe vnto them: but looking higher by the eyes of faith, they conceiued occasion of ioy, whereby all the griefe which they had sustained was sweetened. For it behooueth that our senses bee thus turned from the world, when we behold the heavenly reward. Neither doe I say ought whereof the faithfull haue not experience. For the truth is, wee ioyfully receiue that which we are perswaded shall turne to our saluation. Now it is certaine, that the children

children of God haue this very feeling in the combates which they endure for the glorie of Christ. Wherefore, the affection of the flesh can neuer so ouerwhelme them with griefe, that they should not lift vp their mindes to heauen, and by this meanes enter into a spirituall ioy, as in the example of *Steuens*. And so much doth the reason which he afterwards addes emport. *Knowing* (saith he) *in your selues how that you haue in heauen, a better, and an enduring substance.* They then endured with ioy the spoyling of their goods, not because they tooke pleasure in being spoyled of them simply, but hauing their mindes directed to the recompence, they easily forgot the griefe which they had conceiued in the feeling of the present euill. And surely where the taste of heauenly riches beares rule, there neither the world nor all his allurements haue such sauour, that the feeling of pouertie or reproch can ouerwhelme the mindes of such with sorrow. Wherefore, if wee will patiently and ioyfully beare all things for Christ, let vs accustome our selues to meditate vpon this felicitie often, in respect of which all the things of this world are but filth and dung. In the mean while we must not let that passe which hee saith, *knowing in your selues.* For whosoeuer shall not resolue himselfe in particular, that the heritage which God hath promised to his children doth also appertaine vnto him, it shall profit such a one nothing at all to haue such a generall knowledge.

Those that haue a true taste of the heauenly riches, shall neuer be so ouerwhelmed with sorrow for the losse of the earthly, but they will quietly beare the same for the cause of Christ.

Cast not away therefore your confidence, &c. He sheweth **Ver 35.**

what it is which doth principally confirme vs in perseuerance: to wit, if we hold fast our *confidence*, because that if we cast that away, wee euen deprive our owne selues of the reward which is set before vs. Whence it appeares that this confidence is the foundation of a good and an holy life. Whereas hee vseth the word of *recompence*, or reward, hee thereby diminisheth nothing from the free promise of saluation. For although the faithfull know that their labour shall not be in vaine in the Lord, yet notwithstanding they wholly rest themselves vpon the onely mercie of God. But wee haue elsewhere very often spoken sufficiently of this

Faith the foundation of an holy life.

matter;

Reward im-
punges free im-
putation of
righteousnes.

matter, to wit, how the name of reward doth nothing at all impung the free imputation of righteousness.

36 For ye haue needs of patience, that after ye haue done the Will of God, ye might receiue the promise.

37 For yet a very little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarrie.

38 Now the iust shall liue by faith: but if any withdraw himselfe, my soule shall haue no pleasure in him.

39 But we are not they which withdraw our selues vnto perdition, but follow faith vnto the conseruation of the soule.

Verf. 36.

1
2

The necessitie
of patience.

FOR ye haue needs of patience, &c.] He saith that patience is necessarie, not onely because wee must perseuere vnto the end, but also because Satan hath innumerable meanes to trouble vs. Wherefore if wee were not fortified with an inuincible patience, our courage would quaille vs a thousand times, before wee should euer attaine to the middle of our course. True it is that the inheritance of eternall life is already assured vs: but because this our life is appointed vnto vs as a place for to runne our course in, wee must endeouour to attaine to the end thereof by patience. Now there are many stumbling blockes which present themselues before vs in our way, which will not onely offer to slacke our pace, but wholly to breake off our enterprises, vnlesse we be furnished with a marueilous constancie to resist, by buckling our selues to withstand them. Satan goes about it finely by laying all sorts of incombrances in our way, to discourage vs. In a word, Christians shall neuer set two steps forward without wearines, if they be not supported by patience. Wherefore this is the onely meanes which makes vs to perseuere constantly. Otherwise, wee shall neither obey God, neither yet shall wee euer enioy the inheritance promised vnto vs, which hee here calleth the *promise*, according to the figure called Metonymia.

Verf. 37.

Yet a little while, &c.] To the ende wee should not waxe faint with endeaouering, hee admonisheth vs that the time shall

shall not be long. Now there is nothing more fit to put life and courage into vs, if at any time we faint, than when hope is giuen vs of a speedie and short issue. As if a Captaine or great man of warre should say to his souldiers, the ende of the warres are neere, if so be you fight lustely, euen a little while: so the Apostle admonisheth vs, that if we waxe not wearie, nor fainthearted, the Lord will come shortly, who will deliuer vs from all aduersities. Now to the ende the consolation might haue the greater waight and authoritie, he alleadgeth the testimonie of the Prophet Abacuk, chap. 2.4. But in regard he followed the Greeke translation, hee *The text of A-* straieth somewhat from the words of the Prophet. First of *bacuk expounded.* all I will recite them as they stand in the text of the Prophet, and after we will conferre them with that which the Apostle here recites. The Prophet hauing spoken of the horrible discomfiture of his nation, and beeing feared with his owne prophesie, could not see what way in the world to take, but gets himselfe as it were out of this world, and be-tooke himselfe to his watch tower. Now our watch tower is the word of god, by the which we are exalted vp into heauen. Beeing thus got into his tower, he receiues a commandement to write a new prophesie, by which the assurance of saluation might be brought to the faithfull. Notwithstanding because men are naturally importunate, and so hastie in their affections, that they euermore thinke that God is too slowe, what haste soeuer hee maketh; for this cause hee saith, that the promise shall come, and shall not tarrie. Although he by and by addes, If it tarrie; waite: thereby signifying, that that which God promiseth cannot come so quickly, but we alwaies imagine it comes very late. As the auncient prouerb among the Latines imports: to wit, when we desire a thing, euen haste it selfe is slownesse. It followeth afterward, Behold he that listeth vp himselfe, his soule shall not continue strong; but the iust shall liue by faith. By which words he testifies, that the vnfaithfull shall not remaine firme and stable, let their forces and helpes be neuer so many in which they trust: because the true and stable life:

*Though God
hasten neuer so
fast for our de-
liuerance, yet
we alwaies
thinke him too
long.*

consisteth onely in faith. The vnbeleeuers then may arme themselves with as many defences as they will, yet they shall finde nothing in this whole world but vanitie: so as they shall be constrained euery turning of an hand to tremble and quake. But as touching the godly, their faith shall neuer deceiue them, because it reposeth it selfe in God. Now yee see the meaning of the Prophet. That then which the Prophet saith of the promise, the Apostle transfers vnto God. But because God doth as it were manifest himselfe in a sort, in the accomplishing of his promises: for in this regard there is no great difference as touching the chiefe summe and substance of the speech. The Lord (I say) commeth as often as he stretcheth forth his arme for our succor. The Apostle after the Prophet saith, that this shall be done quickly, because God will not deferre his helpe longer time then is expedient. For when he deferres and prolongeth the time, it is not because he mindes to entertaine vs with a vaine hope, as men are wont to doe: but he knowes the iust opportunitie, which he will not suffer to scape him, but will helpe in due season. Now he saith, *that he which will come, will come and will not tarrie*: which sentence hath two members. By the first we vnderstand that God will helpe and assist vs, because of his promise: by the second, that it shall be in conuenient time, and not latter then is expedient.

Verf. 38.

The necessitie
of faith.

No life with-
out faith.

And the iust shall liue by faith, &c.] His meaning is, that patience and the vertue to persist proceedeth from faith: which is very true. For we shall neuer be able to vndergoe combates, vnlesse we stay vpon faith. As also on the contrarie, *S. Iohn* saith rightly, that faith is our victorie by which we ouercome the world, *1. Ioh. 5. 4.* It is that by which wee ascend vp an high: it is it by which we ouercome and passe beyond all dangers, miseries, and troubles of this present life: it is faith which is a safe and sure haven to preferue vs in the midst of all stormes and tempests. Thus then the Apostle meant to shewe that all they who are accounted iust before God, liue no otherwise but by faith. Whereas he vseth the future tence, saying, *shall liue*: it is to signifie the perpetuie of this life. You may see more touching this point in the

the commentarie vpon the first to the Rom. 17. and vpon Gal. 3. it is where the same testimonie is alleadged. *But if I withdraw himselfe.* What eas the Prophet saith in the Hebrew, *vechab*, that is to say, where there shall be lifting vp, or munition; the soule of a man shall not stand firme or vpright in him: the Greeks haue turned it, as the Apostle doeth here recite it, which partly agrees with the meaning of the Prophet, and in part also agrees not. For there is very little or no difference between this word of Withdrawing, & lifting vp: that is to say, the high courage, wherewithall the wicked are puffed vp. For whereas they proudly lift vp themselves against God, it is by reason of a gyddie and froward peruerse confidence, by which they exempt themselves out of his power, promising themselves rest, with a state and condition void from all aduerfitie. It is said then that they *withdraw themselves*, when they set before them such vaine and false munitions, to repulse all feare and reuerence of God. Thus by this word is expressed as well the nature of faith, as the nature of impietie. For the cause why impietie growes outrageous and arrogant, is because it attributes not that honour to God which appertaines vnto him, so as it suffereth not a man to subiect himselfe to God. And from this pride, outrage, and contempt, it comes to passe, that as long as the vnbeleeuers are in prosperitie, so long they make no bones to fart against the cloudes, as an old latine Poet said long agoe; that is to say, to mocke, and to despise God. Now if there be nothing more contrarie vnto faith, then to *withdraw* it selfe; then the nature of it is, to withdraw a man from himselfe, and to cause him to yeild obedience vnto God. This member, *He shall not please my soule*; or (as I haue more fully translated it) *my soule takes no pleasure in him*, ought to be taken as if the Apostle should alleadge this sentence in his owne person. For his meaning was not to recite the words of the Prophet word by word; but onely to note the place, to the ende to drawe the readers to examine the same more narrowly by themselves.

But we are not they, &c. The Apostle was well content to
Verf. 39.
helpe

helpe himselfe with the Greeke translation, which agreed very wel to the doctrine he handled heretofore: as also now he applies it thereunto very fitly. He warned them before to take heed, least in forsaking the Church, they did not therewithall at the last wholly estrange themselves from the faith and grace of Christ: now he shewes that they are called, yet in such wise as they ought neuer to withdraw themselves. And againe he makes an opposition betweene *faith*, and *withdrawing*: as also he opposeth the *conserving of the soule*, against *perdition*. Let vs note then that this sentence also belongs vnto vs. For if God hath shewed vs so great a fauour as to giue vs the light of his Gospel, euen to vs (I say) who by this meanes are called to saluation; ought we not to know that the ende of our vocation is to profit more and more in the obedience of God, endeauiouring without ceasing to approach neerer and neerer vnto him? Behold the true *conservation of the soule*: for in thus doing, we escape eternall perdition.

CHAP. XI.

Now faith is the ground of things, which are hoped for, and the euidence of things which are not seene.

WHosouer made this the beginning of the eleuenth chapter, hath very vnsitly disioyned the scope and drift of the text. For the meaning of the Apostle is, to proue his former speech touching the necessitie of patience. He alleadged the testimonie of Habacuck, who saith that the iust shall liue by faith: now he shewes what remaineth; to wit, That faith can no more be separate from patience, than from it selfe. Thus stands the order of the words then, We shall neuer attaine to the end of our saluation, vnlesse we be furnished with patience. For the Prophet affirms that the iust shall liue by faith. Now faith calles vs to things very farre off from vs, which wee doe not as yet inioy: it necessarily

cessarily then comprehends patience in it selfe. Thus then this proposition, *That faith is a foundation*, serues as the *Minor* of the syllogisme: whereby also it appeares that they much deceiue themselues, who thinke this place to be a full definition of faith. For the Apostle speaks not here of the whole nature of faith, but hee made choice of a part fitting his purpose; to wit, that faith is alwaies ioined with patience. Let vs now come to the words. He calles it *substance*, or *ground of things hoped for*. It is euident that we hope not for that which we haue in our hands, but for those things which are yet hidden from our senses, or at least wise, the inioying whereof is deferred to another time. The Apostle then now teacheth the very same thing which *S. Paul* doth, *Rom. 8. 24.* for hauing said, that we see not that which wee hope for, he inferreth thereupon, that we waite for it by patience. So our Apostle admonisheth vs that beleue not God so much in regard of things present, as in regard of those things the expectation whereof is yet in suspence. Furthermore the appearance of contradiction, which is in this speech, wants not his grace. Faith, faith he, is the foundation or possession wherein wee haue already set sure footing (for the Greeke word *Hypostasis* which he useth, signifieth so much.) But of what things? of things absent, which are so farre off from being vnder our feete, that they do very much surmount the reach of our vnderstandings.

There is the same consideration in the second member, where he calles it the *evidence*, or certification of things which are not seene. For *evidence*, makes things to appeare; and commonly appertaines vnto those things onely which we feele and perceiue. Thus then at the first view these two things seeme to be contrarie, and yet notwithstanding they agree very well in this part of the definition of faith. For the spirit of God discovereth hidden things vnto vs, whereof there can no knowledge of them come vnto vs in regard of our naturall vnderstanding. For life eternall is promised vs, and yet in the meane time we die. We heare of the blessed resurrection, but yet for all that we are inuironed with rottenesse.

tennesse. We are pronounced iust: and yet notwithstanding sinne dwels still in vs. We heare that we are blessed: but yet are we thorowly bitten with hunger and thirst. God crieth with a lowd voyce that he will by and by assist vs: but yet it seemes when wee crie, that hee stoppeth his eares. What should we now doe in these cases, if we were not built vpon hope, and if in the middest of darknes our mindes did not lift themselues vp farre aboue al that which is in this world, hauing the word, and the Spirit of God for our guides to go before vs? Wherefore faith is well called a subsistence of those things which yet consist in hope, and the euidence of things not scene. Whereas S. *Augustine* doth sometimes translate the Greeke word *Elenchos*, which the Apostle here useth, by a nounce which commeth of the verbe *To ouercome*, I doe not dislike it: for he doth faithfully expresse the Apostles meaning. But yet I had rather call it an euidence or shewing, because it is lesse constrained.

Gen. i. 3.
Ioh. i. 10.

- 2 For by it our elders were well reported of.
3 Through faith wee vnderstand, that the world was ordained by the word of God, so that the things which we see, are not made of things that did appeare.
4 By faith Abel offered vnto God a better sacrifice than Cain, by the which hee obtained witnes that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: by the which faith also he being dead yet speaketh.

Verf. 2.

FOr by it, &c.] He will entreate of this matter to the verie end of the chapter, to wit, that the ancient Fathers obtained saluation by faith onely, and that they were no otherwise acceptable and wel-pleasing vnto God, but by it. The Iewes had some reason to reuerence their ancestors greatly: but yet a sortish and vnbridled admiration of them had so possessed their mindes, that it hindred them much from suffering themselues to bee wholly ruled vnder Christ his government; and this they were carried vnto, either by ambition, or superstition; or both. For hearing that *Abrahams* seede

seede was holy and blessed, they were so puffed vp with this title, that they looked rather vnto men, than vnto God. Moreouer, they had herewithall a stubborne and inconsiderate manner of imitation, because they considered not what it was that deserued imitation indeede in their Fathers. By this meanes they rested in the ancient ceremonies, as if all religion and perfection of holinesse had consisted in them. The Apostle confutes this error, and teacheth what was the chiefe and principall vertue in them, to the end their successors might vnderstand how they might resemble their forefathers in truth. Let vs remember then that the Apostles speciall and chiefe drift of his speech is, to shew that all the Fathers who from the beginning were approoued of God, were no otherwise conioyned with him but by faith: that so the Iewes might know that they had no other meane to bee allowed of God, and to bee knit in an holy vnitie with their Fathers, but by faith: so that as soone as they left faith, they by and by banished themselues from the Church, and were no longer accounted *Abrahams* lawfull children, but bastards.

*The Patriarkes
had no other
band whereby
they were knit
vnto God but
faith.*

By faith we vnderstand, &c.] This is a very good probation of the former sentence. For wee differ in nothing from brute beasts, if wee vnderstand not that the world was created by God. For to what purpose haue men reason and knowledge, but that they might confesse their Creator? Yet so it is that faith only causeth vs to know and acknowledge that God created the world: wherefore no marueile if faith bee accounted the chiefe vertue aboue all others in the ancient fathers. But here a question may be demaunded, why the Apostle affirmes that we vnderstand that by faith, which the Infidels themselues doe know. For the beholding of the heauens and the earth constraines the very wicked to acknowledge the maker of them. And *S. Paul* also by this condemnes all men as guiltie of ingratitude, because that when they knew God, they did not giue that honour which to him belonged, *Rom. 1. 21*. And to say the truth, it had bin vnpossible that the feeling of religion should alwaies haue

Question.

Answer.

been entertained and kept among all people and nations, if mens mindes had not bin possessed with this perswasion, that God is the Creator of the world. It seemes then that this knowledge which the Apostle includeth in faith, may haue place without it. I answer, there hath alwaies been a receiued opinion among all nations, that the world was created by God: but this opinion had no groundednes. For as soone as they imagined some God, they by and by vanished away in their thoughts, so as they rather groped like blinde men after the shadow of some vncertaine God, than any way holding the knowledge of the true God.

Moreouer, seeing it was onely a vanishing imagination which houered in their vnderstandings, it is farre off from a true knowledge. And withall, they assigned Fortune for a Queene in the gouernment of the world. And as touching the prouidence of God, which is onely the gouernesse of all things, of that they make no mention at all. Mens mindes then are blinded with this light of nature, which light shines in all the creatures; till such time as being enlightened by the Spirit of God by faith, they begin to vnderstand that which without faith they should neuer be able to comprehend. Wherefore the Apostle doth rightly attribute such an vnderstanding to faith. For the faithfull haue not a light opinion onely that God is the master workman who hath made the world; but they haue a sure perswasion thereof rooted in their hearts, and doe behold and acknowledge the true God in the same. And withall they apprehend the power of his word; not onely shewing it selfe for a moment in the creation of the world, but manifesting it selfe continually in the vpholding and conseruation of it: neither do they conceiue onely a feeling of his power, but also of his goodnes, wisdom, and equitie: and are hereby stirred vp to serue God, and to loue and reuerence him.

To be made declarations of things, &c.] Here in my iudgement all expositors haue been deceived. For thus they haue expounded these words, to wit, To the end the things which were not seene might be made of things visible. But hardly

can we make any sense of them this way, at the least a very slender sense: moreouer, the dependance of the text cannot beare it. Wherefore, if we will translate it word for word, it cannot be otherwise expounded than thus, To be made demonstrations, or spectacles of inuisible things. Now these words containe in them a very good and profitable doctrine, to wit, that we may perceiue the image of God in this world. And in effect our Apostle teacheth here altogether the same thing which S. *Paul* doth, Rom. I. 20. where hee saith, that the inuisible things of God are manifested vnto vs by the creatiō of the world, being regarded in his works: for God giues a manifest and sufficient witnes of his wisdom, power and eternall goodnes, in the whole frame of the world: and being inuisible in himselfe, he shewes himselfe in a manner to vs in his workes. The world therefore is rightly called the mirrour of the Diuinitie, not that men haue so sharpe an eyesight as to know God in their vnderstandings by the bare beholding of the world, but he so manifests himselfe to the wicked, that they are left without excuse: and the faithfull to whom he hath giuen eyes to see withall, may behold as it were certaine sparkles of his glory shining in euery creature. For questionlesse the world was created, to the end it might be a Theater of Gods glorie.

By faith Abel offered a better sacrifice, &c.] He will shew *Verf. 4.*
hereafter how that all the excellent workes that euer the *Abel.*

faithful haue done; yea whatsoeuer deserued praise in them, was borrowed from the estimation and worthines of their faith: whence it followes that the Fathers pleased God by faith onely, as hath been said alreadie. Now he commends faith for two causes: first, in regard of obedience, because it
neither begins, nor enterpriseth any thing, but according to
that which God hath ordained by his word. Secondly, be-
cause it being setled vpon the promises of God, it giues the
praise and worthines of workes to the free grace of God.

Therefore as oft as mention shall be made of faith in this chapter, let vs remember that the Apostles drift is to teach
the Iewes that they seeke no other rule of faith than the

*No rule of
faith, but the
word of God.*

*The person of a
man must be
accepted, before
his sacrifice
can be allowed:
who is accepted
of God then
but he whose
heart is purged
by faith?*

*No works are
accounted for
iust before God
but those that
proceed from a
righteous man.*

word of God; next that they depend on nothing but vpon his free promises. In the first place he saith, that the sacrifice of *Abel* was not esteemed for any respect better than his brothers, but onely because it was sanctified by faith. For in very truth the fat of the beasts had no such sweete sauour, that God should bee appeased in respect thereof. And the Scriptures doe shew sufficiently for what cause sacrifices were well pleasing vnto him: for these are the words of *Moses*, God had respect to *Abel* and to his gifts. From whence we may easily gather, that his sacrifices were acceptable vnto God, because he himself pleased God. And from whence came it that he pleased him, but because his heart was purged by faith.

God testifying of his gifts.] He confirmeth that which I haue said, to wit, that there comes no works from vs that are acceptable to God, till such time as wee our selues are receiued into fauour: or (to speake more briefly) no workes are reputed for iust before God, but the workes of a righteous man. For see the argument of the Apostle; God testified of the gifts of *Abel*, by the which he obtained the praise of righteousness before him. Now this is a profitable doctrine, and so much the more worthie to bee noted, because the truth of it cannot easily be perswaded vnto vs. For when we see some brightnes to shine, be it in any worke whatsoeuer, wee are suddenly rapt vp into an admiration of it, and wee thinke God cannot iustly reprove it: but hee who onely lookes to the inward puritie of the heart, rests not at all in the outward visors of workes. Let vs learne then that no iust worke can proceede from vs, till such time as we be iustified our selues in the sight of God. *He being yet dead.* This he also attributes to faith, to wit, that God testified he had care of *Abel* after his death, as well as during the time of his life. For when he saith that he spake *being yet dead*, he signifies that which *Moses* recites: to wit, that God was moued by his cruell death to take vengeance of it. Whereas then it is said, that *Abel*, or his blood cried; both the one and the other are figuratiue speeches. Now this was a singular testimonie.

monie of the loue of God towards him, that he had a care of him after he was dead. And from hence it appears that he is of the number of the Saints of God, whose death was precious vnto him, as it is in the 115. Psalm, vers. 15.

5 By faith was Enoch translated, that he should not see death: Gen. 5. 24. neither was he found: for God had translated him; for before he was translated, he was reported of, that he had pleased God.

6 Now without faith it is impossible to please God, for he that cometh to God must beleene that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek him.

By faith Enoch, &c.] He makes choise but of a few of the

Ancients, to the end hee might make way to come the sooner to Abraham, and his posteritie. He shewes that E-

noch was translated by the meanes of faith. But first of all we must vnderstand the reason why God tooke him out of this world after such an extraordinarie manner. It was an excellent testimonie, whereby all men might know how greatly hee was beloued of God. For at that time impietie, and all manner of corruptions reigned euery where: if hee had died after the common manner of men, none would haue thought hee had been so preserved by the prouidence of God, that hee should not be infected with the common contagion of the time: but in regard he was caught vp without dying, the hand of God did therein manifestly shew it selfe from heaven, by pulling him as it were out of the midst of the fire. It is no small signe of honour then you see which the Lord shewed him in this translating of him.

Now the Apostle affirms that hee obtained this by faith. It is true indeed that Moses declares how he was a iust man, and one that walked with God: but for as much as faith is the beginning of righteousness, therefore this loue of God towards him is rightly attributed to faith. As touching curious questions wherewith curious heads are wont to intangle themselues, it is better to passe by them in silence. They aske forsooth what became of Enoch and Elias. And

Curious questions are to be avoided.

least

least they should bee thought to put forth a question in vaine, they diuine that they are kept vntill the last times of the Church, to appeare then suddainly to the world. And to prooue this they alleadge the Reuelation. of *S. Iohn*. But let vs leaue this phantastickall philosophie to light heads, who cannot long settle themselves in any certaine place. Let vs content our selues to know that their translating hence, was vnto them as an extraordinarie death: and let vs not doubt but they put off their mortall and corruptible flesh, to the end they might be renued into the blessed immortallitie with the other members of Christ.

Verf. 6.

But without faith it is impossible, &c.] This proposition is common to all the examples which the Apostle recites in this chapter: but because there is some obscuritie in it, it is needfull for vs to examine the sense of it somewhat more narrowly. Now wee shall haue no better Expositor of the place, than himselfe which speaks: and so the prooffe which he addeth by and by after, will serue vs for a good exposition of it. I will tell you the reason, saith he, why none are accepted of God vnlesse they haue faith: to wit, because none can be said to come vnto God indeed vnlesse hee beleue that God is, neither yet vnlesse they be certainly perswaded that he is a rewarder of all them that seeke him, and call vpon him. Now if there be no accesse vnto God but by faith, it therupon followes, that whosoever hath it not, must needes be hated of God. First of all then, the Apostle hereby shewes vs how faith gets vs fauour with God: that is, because it teacheth vs how wee ought to serue the true God: secondly, in regard it assures vs of his will, to the ende wee should not be distrustfull, as if we sought him in vaine. We must not passe ouer these two members lightly: to wit, first that we beleue God is: secondly, that wee be certainly perswaded that we seeke him not, nor call vpon him in vaine. It may seeme indeede that the Apostle requires no great matter here, when he saith, we must beleue that God is: But if we take a narrow view of it, we shall finde that here is a very large and necessarie doctrine, which is not vnderstood of euery

The first member.

very one. For although all men generally doe confesse there
is a God: yet notwithstanding vnlesse the Lord vphold vs in
the steadfast knowledge of himselfe, we shall often enter in-
to doubts and diuers disputations, which will both take
from vs, and cause vs utterly to loose all sense of the diuine
Maiestie: out of question the corrupt nature of man is incli-
ned too much to this vanitie; namely, very easily to forget
God. Although the Apostle meant not to perswade vnto
men, that they should onely beleue at randon that there
is some God, but he speaks this of the true God. It sufficeth
not, I say, to apprehend some God in generall, vnlesse wee
discerne which is the true God: for what shall it aduantage
thee to forge an idol, to which thou doest attribute and
translate that glorie, which thou oughtest to giue to God
onely? We now perceiue the Apostles meaning as touching
this first member: which in effect is this, That we can haue no
accesse at all to God, vnlesse this principle be profoundly
ingrauen in our hearts, that *be it* to the ende we be not car-
ried hither and thither with diuers opinions. Whence wee
may learne, how vaine a thing it is for men to labour to
serue God, vnlesse they know the right way; and that what-
soever religion it bee, which hath not the true and certaine
knowledge of God ioyned with it, is not onely vaine, but is
also starke naught. For all those that make no difference be-
tweene God and idols, can haue no accesse vnto him. In a
word, there is no religion, but that wherein the truth bea-
reth sway. So that if there be a true knowledge of God roo-
ted in our hearts, it cannot be but wee should be moued
with feare and reuerence: for God is not truely knowne
without his Maiestie. And from thence springs the desire to
serue him, and to direct our whole life vnto him, as vnto the
chiefe marke.

The second member is, that we be certainly perswaded,
that we neither seeke, nor serue him in vaine. Now this per-
swasion comprehends in it the hope of saluation, and of e-
ternall life: for a man will neuer be truely affected in his
minde to seeke God and call vpon him, vnlesse he be touch-

*There is no re-
ligion but
where truth
beares the
sway.*

*The second
member.*

He that hath
not a true taste
of Gods good-
nesse, wil neuer
seeke to God,
nor call vpon
him.

Merit of workes

The meanes
how to seeke
God.

1

It is not
enough
to say
that we
must
bring
any
merit
of
workes
vnto
God.

It is not
enough
to say
that we
must
bring
any
merit
of
workes
vnto
God.

ed with the feeling of his goodnesse, hoping for saluation at his hand: for we either despise, or flie from God, if wee be- hold not saluation in him. Now let vs remember that wee must beleue this, and not content our selues with a bare & naked opinion of it. For although the wicked, and ynbeleeuers doe sometimes conceiue something like vnto it, yet for all that they doe not therefore come vnto God, because they are not staied ypon a firme and steadfast faith: this is the second part of faith, by which we obtaine fauour with God: to wit, when we are certainly perswaded that we haue saluation in him.

But many doe maliciously corrupt this second member, by drawing from it the merit of workes, and the confidence of meriting. For see how they frame their argument: If wee be acceptable to God by faith, because we beleue him to be a rewarder of them that seeke him: faith then (say they) hath respect to the merit of workes. But the onely way to refute this error, is to consider of the meanes by which we seeke God. For we must not bee so foolish to thinke wee seeke God, when wee erre from the right way of seeking him. Now the scripture assigneth this to be the meane and way to seeke God: first, that a man be humbled in himselfe, and touched to the quicke by feeling himselfe guiltie of eternall death before God, utterly despairing of any helpe in himselfe: secondly, that such a one haue his refuge vnto Christ, as to the onely haue of his saluation: for it is certain we cannot find in any place of scripture that we must bring any merit of workes vnto God, to get our selues in fauour with him. He therefore that shall well vnderstand this definition of seeking God, shall winde himselfe out of this difficultie. For reward is not to be referred to the digulcie or merit of workes, but to faith. Thus doe all the silly gloses of the Sophisters fall to the ground: By faith, say they, we please God, because by meriting (forsooth) we haue a purpose to please him. But the Apostle would carrie vs higher than so: to wit, that the conscience might haue certaine assistance in it selfe, that it shall not loose the labour in seeking God. Which

Which assurance farre surmounteth our capacitie, specially when every man descendeth into the consideration of himselfe. For we must not onely hold this generall proposition, that God is the rewarder of them that seeke him: but every man must apply the profit & fruit of this doctrine to himselfe in particular: to wit, we must know that God respecteth vs, that he hath such a tender care of our saluation, as he will neuer suffer vs to perish: that he heareth our praiers, and will be our perpetuall & exceeding great reward. Now seeing we can haue none of al this without Christ, it must needs follow of necessitie that our faith haue alwaies an eie vnto him, and that in him alone it is to rest and content it selfe.

Knowledge profits not, vnlesse there be application.

*John V
11. 25*

Thus from these two members we may gather how, and wherefore it is impossible to please God without faith. For iustly doeth he hate vs all, seeing we every one of vs are accursed by nature: and as for any remedie to doe vs good in this case, we haue none at all in our selues. Wherefore it is necessarie that God prevent vs by his grace. Which he doth when we so acknowledge him to be God, that wee be not turned aside from him elsewhere by any peruerse superstition: as also, when we promise our selues to haue assured saluation in him. Now if we would yet haue a more ample declaration of this point, we must begin at this, to wit, that we shall neuer benefit our selues in any thing whatsoeuer wee expect or enterprise, vnlesse we looke vnto God. For there is none other ende of liuing well, but to serue to his glorie: to which ende we shall neuer be able to attaine, vnlesse the knowledge of him goe before. This is indeed but the one halfe of faith, and would stand vs in no great stead, vnlesse confidence be ioyned therewithall. Wherefore, faith is then perfect and entire to obtaine vs fauour with God, when wee haue this settled confidence, that we seeke him not in vaine, and when wee assure our selues of vndoubted saluation in him. Now who is he that will trust in God to be the rewarder of his merits, vnlesse hee bee blinded with pride, and bewitched with a peruerse loue of himselfe? And therefore this confidence, or assurance whereof we speake, resteth it selfe onely,

Faith must content it selfe in Christ alone.

No other ende of liuing well, but to serue to Gods glorie.

onely vpon the free grace of God, and not vpon works, neither vpon the proper dignitie of men. But seeing this grace of God is no where to be found, but in Christ, there is none other but he to whom our faith must haue regard.

Verf. 7.
Gen. 6. 13.

7 By faith Noah being warned of God of the things which were as yet not seene, moued with reuerence, prepared the Arke to the sauing of his household, through the which Arke he condemned the world, and was made heire of the righteousnesse, which is by faith.

Noah.

This was a singular example of vertue: to wit, that all the world being plunged in pleasures, and making themselves beleue they should escape vnpunished, as if there had beene no iudgment of God to come vpon them, that *Noah* alone should set before his eies the diuine vengeance, although it were yet to be deferred for a long time: besides, he trauelled wonderfully for the space of sixe score yeares to build an Arke: he also continued firme and constant in the midst of so many mockes of the wicked. And, in the destruction of the whole world, hee doubted not but he should be saued; nay which more is, he assured himselfe of life euen in the very graue, that is to say, in the Arke. I do but lightly touch these things: euery one may better consider of further circumstances by himselfe. The Apostle attributes the praise of these so excellent and rare vertues vnto faith. Hitherto hee hath intreated of the faith of the Fathers which liued vnder the first age of the world. But this was as a second birth of mankind, when both *Noah*, and his familie escaped the flood. Hence it followeth, that in what time soeuer men liued, yet they were no otherwise approoued of God, neither did they euery worke that was worthy of praise, but by faith. Let vs now see what the Apostle setteth before vs in the example of *Noah* to consider of: first, that he being warned of God of the things which were yet not seene, feared: Secondly, that he built an Arke: thirdly, that he condemned the world by this building: lastly, that he

he was made *heire of the righteousness which is by faith*. The first thing which I noted, doth greatly expresse the vertue of faith. For it alwaies brings vs backe to this principle, that faith is the euidence of things not scene. And in very deepe the nature and propertie of it is to behold in Gods word *The nature of faith.* the things which are hidden, and are farre distant from our sight. When he was admonished that the flood should come after an hundred and twentie yeeres; first of all the length of time might haue taken all feare away from him, and the thing it selfe also was incredible: In the meane time also he saw the wicked giue themselues ouer to all manner of pleasures without any care of God at all: In a word, a man might haue thought that this terrible newes of the flood was nothing else but a vaine scare-crow. But *Noah* bare such *reuerence* to the word of God, that turning his eyes from beholding of things present, *he so feared* the ruine wherewith all God had threatned the world, as if it had beene present.

The faith then which he had in the word of God framed him to that obedience, by which he gaue a testimonie in the building of the Arke. But some make a question here why *Obiection.* the Apostle makes faith the cause of feare, seeing faith hath respect rather to the promises of grace, than to the threatnings: by reason whereof Saint *Paul* calles the Gospell (by which the righteousness of God is offered vs vnto saluation) the word of faith, *Rom. 10. 8*: It seemes then it is an improper speech to say, that faith moued *Noah* to *reuerence*. I an- *Answer.*

swere, that properly faith springs out of the promises; that it is built vpon them; that they are rightly and truly her object: and therefore wee say that Christ is the true object *The true object of faith.* of faith, in whose person the heavenly Father is mercifull vnto vs, and in whom are sealed vp, and confirmed, all the promises of saluation. And yet notwithstanding this is no hindrance why faith should not looke vnto God, and that it should not with reuerence receiue whatsoever hee commandeth. Or if wee will haue it in fewer words, The nature of faith is to heare God speake, and without any doubting

*Why the Gos-
pell is called
the word of
faith.
Rom. 10. 8.*

at al to receiue whatsoeuer proceeds out of his holy and sa-
cred mouth. Faith then you see is no lesse subiect to y com-
mandements and threatnings, than it is to the free promi-
ses. But because we are neuer touched as we should, and as
neede requireth with the commandements of God to yeeld
him that obedience he requireth, neither yet moued by his
threatnings to seeke by prayers, to preuent, and turne away
his wrath, vnlesse wee haue first apprehended the promises
of grace, so as wee can boldly acknowledge God to be our
mercifull Father and the author of our saluation: for this
cause the Gospell is called, as of the principall part of it, the
word of faith: and thus wee doe put a mutuall relation, or
correspondencie, between faith and the Gospell. Yet how-
soeuer faith in some things doe looke directly to the pro-
mises of God: so also doth she no lesse looke vnto the
threatnings, so farre, soorth as is necessarie for vs to be led
to the feare and obedience of God. *hom. 10. 8. 10. 11.*

To the sauing of his household.] He here sheweth the obe-
dience of *Noah*, which issueth from faith, as water from a
fountaine. The building of the Arke was both a long work,
and of great labour: he might haue been hindred, yea a
thousand times might this worke haue been broken off, had
there been no other impediments than the scoffes & mocks
of the wicked: for no doubt they came running vpon this
holy personage from euery coast to gaze at this strange
building. Whereas then hee did thus constantly beare all
their outragious and proud assaults, he shewed that he had
a wonderfull power wrought in his affections to obey. But
whence came it that he so constantly obeyed God, but that
he had before rested in the promise which gaue him good
hope of safetie, and that he should perseuere in this confi-
dence vnto the end? For it had been impossible for him, of
his owne free will to haue endured so many troubles; to
haue overcome so many hindrances, and to endure so con-
stant in his purpose, vnlesse faith had gone before. Faith then
is the onely mistress, or mother of obedience: whence wee
may gather on the contrarie, that infidelitie is the onely let
that

*Faith the ma-
ther of obe-
dience.*

that keepeth vs from obeying of God. And at this day the incredulitie of the world doth manifest it selfe in this respect after a very fearefull manner, to wit, in that there is so little obedience.

*In fidelitie only
binders obe-
dience.*

By which he condemned the world.] If we say that *Noah* condemned y^e world because he was saued, referring this word *by the which*, to his safetie, it should be too constrained a sense: again, that it should be vnderstood of faith, the scope of the text will hardly suffer it: wee must therefore vnderstand it of the Arke. Now it is said that he condemned the world by the Arke for two causes. For in that he was so long time occupied in building the Arke, this tooke away all excuse from the reprobates: and the euent which followed, shewed that the destruction of the world was iust. For why was the Arke the safegard of saluation to this one familie, but that the wrath of the Lord spared this holy personage, to the end he should not perish with the wicked? Wherefore if he and his familie had not been preserved as a little remnant, the condemnation of the world had not been so euident. In that *Noah* then obeyed the commandement of God, he by his example condemned the obstinacie of the world: And in that he was so miraculously deliuered from the gates of death, it was an instructiō that the whole world was iustly destroyed, the which God would doubtlesse haue saued, if it had not been vnworthie of so great a mercie. And was made heire of that righteousness which is by faith. This is the last thing which the Apostle would haue vs to obserue in the person of *Noah*. *Moses* telleth how he was a iust man: the Apostle testifieth that faith was the roote, and the cause of this his iustice, or righteousness. The which is true, not onely because a man will neuer yeeld himselfe in truth, and vnfaignedly obedient to God, vnlesse he be first settled vpon the promises of his fatherly good will, confidently beleeuing that himselfe, and all his actions are acceptable vnto him: but also because the life of a man, be it neuer so holie, if it once come to be examined according to the strict rule of Gods iustice, can in no wise be wel-pleasing in his sight without remission of sinnes. You see then it is
necessarie

I

2

*In what sense
Noah is said to
condemne the
world.*

*Faith the roote
and cause of
righteousnes.*

necessarie that righteousness be grounded and upheld by faith.

Gen. 12. 4.

8 By faith *Abraham*, when he was called, obeyed God, to goe out into a place, which he should afterward receive for inheritance, and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

9 By faith he abode in the land of promise, as in a strange country, as one that dwelt in tents, with *Isaak* and *Iacob* heires with him of the same promise.

10 For he looked for a citie having a foundation, whose builder and maker is God.

Gen. 17. 19.
& 21. 2.

11 Through faith *Sara* also received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she indged him faithfull which had promised.

12 And therefore sprang thereof one, even of one which was dead, so many as the starres of the skie in multitude, and as the sand of the sea shore which is innumerable.

Abraham.

HE comes now to speake of *Abraham*: who was the principall father of the Church of God vpon earth: of whose name the Iewes boasted, as if by this onely title they had been exempt out of the common order of men, because they were descended from his holy stocke and linage. Now hee shewes them what they ought especially to haue, if they would bee reputed among the children of *Abraham*: and by this meanes brings them to faith: because euen *Abraham* himselfe had nothing worthie of praise, but that

1 which proceeded from thence. First, he teacheth that faith was the cause that he so suddenly obeyed God, when he was
2 commanded to goe out of his country. Secondly, that by

Two trials of
faith.

meanes of the same faith he continued constant in his vocation vnto the end. By these two testimonies was the faith of *Abraham* cleerely proued: first, by his readines to obey: secondly, by his constancie in perseuering. *Being called*. The ancient Latin Translator and *Erasmus* referre this to the name: which should bee a very colde and fillie sense. For mine owne part I had rather expound it of the oracle, by which

which *Abraham* was called to goe out of his countrie: for he banished himselfe out of the same in such sort, that yet in the meane while he did nothing without the commandement of God. And in very truth, it is one of the principles *A principle of* of faith, that wee mooue not so much a foote, vnlesse Gods *faith.* word goe before to shew vs the way; nor vnlesse it giue vs light as a lanterne: as *Dauid* saith, *Psalm*. 119. 105. Wherefore let vs learne to obserue this all our life long: that wee take nothing in hand, but accordingly as we are called thereunto of God.

To come to the place which he should afterward take for an inheritance.] With the commandement he had a promise, that God would giue him the land for an inheritance: he by and by embraced this promise, and was no lesse ioyfull of it, than if he had been put into present possession of it. Behold a singulat prooffe of faith. First, to forsake that we haue *Another triall* in hand, as they say: secondly, to goe seeke things which *of faith.* are very farre off from vs, and altogether vnknowne vnto vs. For when God commanded him to goe forth, he assigned him no certaine place where it was his pleasure hee should inhabite, but left his minde perplexed, and in suspence. *Come* (saith he) *to the place which I will shew thee.* Wherefore did he deferre to shew him the place, but to the end his faith should be more and more exercised? *Gen.* 12. 1. Againe, the loue of his owne countrie might not only haue slacked *Abrahams* readines, but also wholly haue locked vp his heart from going out of his house. His faith then was excellent, seeing it brake through all difficulties, and did thus flie to the place whither the Lord called it.

By faith he remained, &c.] This is the second member, to *Verf. 9. 9.* wit, that hee being entred into the promised land, could hardly finde entertainment therein as a stranger. Where was this inheritance which he hoped for? Truly he might forthwith haue thought that God had deceiued him: and might haue had a greater occasion than the former to nourish this thought (which the Apostle omitteth) to wit, because by and by after, famine did driue him thence: so as hee was twice constrained

constrained to flee into the land of Gerar. But the Apostle contents himself to commend his perscuerance in one word, in saying that he was *as a stranger in the land of promise*. For the condition of a stranger was contrarie to the promise. When *Abraham* then constantly sustained this tentation, it was an excellent vertue in him, but yet such as proceeded from no other cause than faith. *With Isaak and Iacob*. His meaning is not that they dwelled together in the same tents or in one time, but he makes *Abraham* a companion with his sonne, and his sonnes sonne, because they were trauellers in the heritage which was promised to them: and yet fainted not, although God made them waite a long time. For by how much the more their hope was deferred, by so much the more their tentations increased, if they had not manfully repulsed all the doubts and assaults by the buckler of faith.

Verse 10.

For he looked for a citie, &c.] He giues a reason wherefore he attributes their perscuerance vnto faith: to wit, because they looked vnto heauen: and this was to see those things which yet were not to be seene. For although it was to their great commendation that they had already entertained the assurance of the promise into their hearts which God had made vnto them of enioying the land, so as after some good space of time, the thing should be accomplished and giuen them indeede: yet in that they did not wholly stay themselues in the hope of that onely, but pearced euen vnto heauen it selfe, in this they did shew yet a more cleere and euident marke of their faith. He calles heauen *a citie that hath a foundation*, because it shall endure for euer, whereas there is nothing in this world that is not earthly and transitorie. But this manner of speech may seeme absurd, when he makes God to bee the creator of heauen; as if hee had not created the earth also. I answer, that because in earthly buildings, besides the matter, there is also the hand and mens industries, therefore the workmanship of God is not opposed to them in this place amisse. For whatsoeuer is built of men, tastes of the instabilitie of those that made it: as on the contrarie,

contrarie, the perpetuall life agrees to the nature of him who is the builder of it, to wit, God. Furthermore, to the end that we neuer waxe wearie in following God, the Apostle teacheth that all encombrances are lightened by waiting for this heavenly life.

By faith Sara also, &c. To the end women may know and vnderstand that this doctrine is no lesse common vnto them than vnto men, he brings in the example of *Sara*, the whom he notes out before all others, because shee is the mother of all the faithfull. But it is wonderfull that her faith is commended, seeing shee is manifestly conuicted of infidelitie; for shee laughed at the word of the Angel, as if it had beene a fable, Gen. 18. 12. Her laughing was not by way of admiration: for if it had, shee should not haue beene so sharply reprooued of the Angel. It must bee confessed, that her faith was mingled with infidelitie: but because shee corrected her distrust after shee was admonished, shee is notwithstanding that, allowed of God, and her faith commended. Whereas then at the first shee reiected this message of the Angel, as a thing incredible, yet as soone as shee vnderstood that it proceeded from the mouth of God, shee receiued it in obedience. And from hence we gather a very profitable doctrine, that howsoeuer our faith doe somewhat wauer and halt, yet it ceaseth not for all that to be approoued of God; provided that we let not loose the raines to distrust. Now the summe is, that the miracle which God did when *Isaack* was begotten, was the fruite of the faith of Abraham and his wife, by which they apprehended and felt the power of God.

Because shee iudged him faithfull that had promised. These reasons are to be diligently obserued, which doe expresse the vertue and nature of faith. If a man should onely heare that *Sara* conceived by faith, he should not yet vnderstand all: but this exposition which the Apostle addeth, takes away all difficultie. For he saith, that *Saraes* faith consisted in this, that shee iudged God to be faithfull; and that in his promises: which sentence containes two members. For first wee are

Vers. 11.

Sara.

Women haue interest in the matter of eternall life, as well as men.

Obiection.

Answers.

Faith commended, though it were mingled with distrust.

Distrust must not be nourished.

hereby taught that there is no faith without the word of God, because we shall neuer be perswaded of his faithfulness; till he himselfe haue spoken. And this place alone sufficeth to refute the fancie of the Sophisters, touching an infolded faith. For we must alwaies hold the mutuall relation, and correspondencie which is betweene the word of God, and faith. But because faith is chiefly founded in the goodnesse of God (as hath beene said alreadie) therefore euery word of God is not sufficient, I say not that which proceeds euen from Gods owne mouth: but the promise is here required, which testifies his fauour and grace towards vs. For this cause it is said, that *Sara* esteemed God which *had promised*, to be faithfull. This, I say, is the true faith, which heares God speake, and rests it selfe vpon his promise.

That is the
true faith
which heares
God speake, &
rests it selfe vpon
his promises.
Verf. 12.

And thereof sprang, &c.] Now he also admonisheth the Iewes, that faith is the cause that they are the offspring of *Abraham*. For *Abraham* was alreadie as a man halfe dead, and *Sara* his wife, who was barren in the flower of her youth, was likewise as good as dead by reason of age. These things considered; who would not as soone haue hoped for oyle to haue issued out of a stone, as to expect a people to proceed from their loynes? And yet notwithstanding an innumerable multitude proceeded thence. If the Iewes now will boast themselues of their race, let them consider from what cause so great a multitude sprang forth. Truly let them thinke as highly of themselues as they can; yet ought they to attribute their excellencie to the faith of *Abraham*, and of *Sara*: whence it followes, that they can no otherwise keepe and maintaine an happie estate indeede, but by faith.

13 *All these died in faith, and receined not the promises, but saue them as farre off, and beleened them, and receined them thankfully, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*

14 *For they that say such things, declare plainely, that they seeke a countrie.*

15 *For*

15 For if they had bene mindefull of that countrie, from whence they came out, they had leisure to haue returned.

16 But now they desire a better, that is an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed of them to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a citie.

HE amplifies and enlargeth the faith of the Patriarkes by way of comparison: for albeit they did but onely taste, as it were, of the promises of God, yet beeing filled and satisfied with the sweetnes of them, they despised whatsoever was in the world; and neuer forgot, no not in the least measure, this sweet relish which they had in them; neither in life, nor in death. Although this word, *According to the faith*, be expounded two waies. Some vnderstand it simply, that they died according to the faith, because during this life they neuer inioyed the good things which were promised them: So, at this day, our saluation is hidden vnder hope. Notwithstanding, I rather consent to those who thinke the difference between the Auncient fathers and vs is here touched: and I expound it thus: Albeit God onely gaue the Fathers a taste of that grace, which is shedde vpon vs abundantly: albeit he shewed them the obscure Image of Christ as farre off, which is now represented vnto vs almost in as visible a manner as if it were before our eies: yet notwithstanding they setled themselues firmly vpon this their faith, and were neuer turned away from it: much more if we then, to whom at this day there is offered such ample matter of perseuerance; if we (I say) be discouraged, & faint, are we not euery way left without excuse? This circumstance then aggrauates and augments the weight of the speech: to wit, The Fathers beheld the spirituall kingdome of Christ to come; which is now set euen before our eies: They saluted the promises as farre off; which doe now dwell familiarly as it were, in the midst of vs. If they then ceased not neuerthelesse to perseuere constantly euen vnto the death; what slouthfulnesse shall it bee in vs, now to cast away our confidence, seeing the Lord is ready to stay and vphold vs

Verf. 13.

If the Patriarks who saw Christ as farre off, gaue such testimonie of the firmenes of their faith: what shame is it for vs to faint now, to whom he is so cleerely manifested?

Obiection.

Answer.

with so many helpes? If any man object, that they could not belecue, vnlesse they receiued the promises whereupon it was necessarie faith should be founded: I answer, this is spoken by comparison. For they were farre off that degree, to which God hath now exalted vs. Wherefore, howsoeuer they had the selfe same promise of saluation with vs, yet notwithstanding, they had not that same clearenesse of the promises, which wee now inioy vnder the kingdome of Christ; but contented themselves to behold them as farre off.

Confessing that they were pilgrimes, and strangers.] Iacob confessed this, when he answered *Pharoab*, that the daies of his pilgrimage were fewe and euill, in respect of the peregination of his fathers; as also that these his daies were full of many euils, Gen. 47.9. If *Iacob* acknowledged himselfe to be a stranger in that land which was promised him as a perpetuall inheritance, it thereby appeares, that he was not of this world; but did set his affections on things that were farre aboue in the heauens. And therefore the Apostle infers that the Fathers did euidently shew by this their manner of speech, that they had a better countrie in heauen. For if they were strangers and pilgrimes, then had they another countrie wherein they had a certaine dwelling. Now if these men in the mids of so many darke clouds, did yet in spirit soare euen vnto the heavenly countrie, what ought we to doe at this day, wee I say, to whom Christ doeth so apparantly stretch forth his hand from heauen, to lift vs vp thither? If the land of Canaan could not keepe them backe; how much more ought we to stand vpon our deliuerance, & freedome; we (I say) to whome there is no certaine abode promised in this world?

If the Fathers
under the law
who were com-
passed about
with so many
darke clouds,
did not with-
standing aspire
vnto beauen:
how much
more ought
we, to whom
Christ now
reacheth his
hand to draw
vp thither?

Vers. 15.

And if they had beene mindefull, &c.] He preuents an obiection which might bee made to the contrarie: to wit, that they were therefore strangers, because they had left their country. The Apostle replies, surely, when they called themselves strangers, they thought not of Mesopotamia, for if they had beene desirous thereof, it remained still in their power to haue returned backe againe. But they banished them.

themselves from thence of their own accord: and which more is, they renounced it, as though it did nothing at all appertaine vnto them. They meant another countrie then, which was out of this world.

Wherefore God is not ashamed to call them, &c. He hath respect vnto that sentence, *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*, Exod. 3. 6. Truly it is no small honour, when God makes himselfe famous, as it were, with the names of men; also which by this marke he wil be discerned (as you would say) from Idols. The Apostle shewes that this priuiledge was also founded vpon faith, because that as the holy Fathers aspired vnto the heavenly countrie; so God also for his part held them to be of the number of his citizens. But we must gather from hence that we haue no place among the children of God, vnlesse we renounce the world: as also that we shal haue no inheritance in heauē, vnlesse we be strangers on earth. Furthermore, from these words, *I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob*, the Apostle rightly gathereth that they are heires of heauen: because God is not the God of the dead, but of the liuing.

Vers. 16.

*We shall haue
no inheritance
in heauen, vn-
lesse we count
our selues
strangers in
the earth.*

17 By faith Abraham offered vp Isaac, when he was tried, and he that receiued the promises offered his onely begotten Sonne.

Gen. 22. 10.

18 (To whom it was said, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.)

Gen. 21. 12.

19 For he considered that God was able to raise him vp euen from the dead: from whence he receiued him also after a sort.

20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob & Esau concerning things to come.

21 By faith Jacob when he was a dying, blessed both the sonnes of Ioseph, and leaning on the ende of his staffe, worshipped God.

22 By faith Ioseph when he died made mention of the departing of the children of Israel, and gaue commandment of his bones.

Faith was A-
brahams chie-
fest vertue.

How God is
said to tempt or
prooue.

By faith *Abraham offered. &c.*] He goes on still with that which remained as touching *Abraham*. For hee recites the offering of his sonne. Now this is a singular example of vertue, and constancie, the like whereof is very hardly to be found. And therefore hee addes by way of amplification, *when he was tempted*. True it is that *Abraham* had already shewed by many examples what hee was, yet notwithstanding the Apostle would haue this triall to be had in estimation aboue all others; it beeing indeed much more excellent than all others. This then is as much as if hee had said, *Abrahams* greatest vertue was the offering vp of his sonne: because then especially and principally it is said that God prooued him. Yet euen this worke also proceeded of faith, *Abraham* then had no vertue in him more excellent than faith, which yeilded so singular a fruite.

This word of *Tentatio*, signifies only probation. *S. Iames* faith, we are not tempted of God, but in another sense, to wit, that he sollicites vs not vnto euill, for (as he very well saith, euery one of vs doeth that by his own concupiscence: and yet he denies not but that God prooues our integritie and obedience. Notwithstanding wee must not say that God prooues vs, as if otherwise he were ignorant what lay hidden within our hearts. God (I say) hath no neede to prooue vs, as if then he beganne to take knowledge of vs: but when he brings vs forth into the light, that by our workes we may apparantly testifie that which before was hiddē: it is said that he tries or proues vs: & then that which thus comes to light, & is manifested by the effects, is said to be made known vnto God. For it is a manner of speaking which the Scripture very oftē & familiarly vseth, to wit, that God trāsferres that vnto himselfe which belōgs to mē. The offering vp of *Isaak* is esteemed according to the affection of the heart: for *Abraham* had not cared to put that in execution which was cōmanded. Now this wil to obey him, was as much in account with God, as if hee had sacrificed his sonne.

Offered his onely begotten sonne.] Hee would shewe by these

these circumstances, how great and how lively a triall of *Abrahams* faith and obedience this was: although we must be faine also to gather other circumstances out of the historie of *Moses*, which tend to the very same end. *Abraham* was commanded to take *his sonne*, *his onely sonne*, yea *his sonne Isaac*, whome *hee loved*: and to carry him to a place which should afterward be shewed him, and there to kill him with his owne hands. God doeth thus heape vp many words and phrases so full of tender affections, euen of set purpose, to the end hee might pierce this holy personage with wounds euen to the very depth of his heart. And to the end he might yet put him to further torment, hee commands him to make a iourney of three dayes. What sharpe tortures were these thinke we to the good old man, to haue his sonne alwayes in his eyes, whome hee had alreadie appointed to a violent death? When hee came to the place where he was commanded to sacrifice him, behold then a new wound, wherewith *Isaac* pierst his fathers heart more deeply then all the rest: to wit, when hee asked him where the beast was that should be sacrificed. If hee had dyed but a common death, it would haue been most bitter: a violent death would haue stricken neerer: but when the father is commanded to put him to a violent death, and that with his owne hand, truely this is so bitter, that it is intollerable, especially to the heart of a kind father. It had been enough to haue made him quaille a thousand times, if faith had not lifted vp his heart farre aboute this world. It is not without cause then that the Apostle tels vs that *Abraham* was tempted. But yet some make a question here, wherefore *Isaac* is called the onely sonne, seeing *Ishmael* was borne before him, who also was then aliue. I answer, In as much as hee was driuen out of the family by a diuine oracle, hee was accounted but for a dead man; at the least, he was not held or reputed amongst the sonnes of *Abraham*.

The triall of
Abrahams
faith.

1

2

3

4

Question.

Answer.

After he had receiued the promises.] Whatsoeuer we haue hitherto rectified; although they were things wherewithall the heart of *Abraham* was wounded to the very

quicke, yet were they all but flea bitings in regard of this tentation, to wit, that hauing receiued the promises, hee is then commanded to put his sonne *Isaak* to death. For al the promises were founded vpon this, In *Isaak* shall thy seede be called, Gen. 21. 12: so that this being taken away, there remained vnto him no more hope of blessing, or of grace. The question is not here then as touching any earthly matter, but of *Abrahams* eternall saluation, yea of the saluation of the whole world. How many, and how great anguishes of minde thinke we was this good personage cast into, when it came into his heart that with the losse of his sonnes life, the hope of eternall saluation should be cleane cut off and extinguished? And yet notwithstanding by faith hee went on valiantly (ouercomming all these thoughts) to put that in execution which was commanded him of God. If this his constancie deserues the title of an admirable vertue, thus to hold out in the middest of so many hard incumbrances, then doubtlesse that faith which onely was the cause that made *Abraham* thus constantly to perseuere, must of necessitie deserue to carrie away the prize.

Obiection.

But hereof ariseth no small difficultie: how should *Abrahams* faith be thus highly comended, seeing he forsooke the promise? For as it is true that obedience springs from faith, so also is it as true that faith springs out of the promise. *Abraham* then being destitute of the promise, his faith also must needs vanish. But the death of *Isaak* (as we haue already said) was as a cleane extinguishing of all the promises. For *Isaak* must not now bee considered as a private person among others, but as he in whose loynes Christ was inclosed. The Apostle himselfe giues vs the solution to this question, which would otherwise be somewhat difficult: adding by and by that *Abraham* gaue God this honour, to wit, he thought him able to raise vp his sonne againe euen from the dead. Therefore he reiected not the promise that was made vnto him, but did extend the truth and vertue thereof farre aboue the life of his sonne, because hee limited not the power of God within so narrow a compasse, as to thinke

Answer.

Verf. 19.

thinke that *Isaak* being dead, that also should therefore be bound, or quenched. By this meanes he kept the promise still, because hee tied not the power of God to the life of *Isaak*, but had this certaine perswasion, that it would shew it selfe no lesse powerful euen in his dead ashes, than in quickning and restoring his life againe.

How Abraham may be said to hope about hope.

From whence he recovered him after a sort.] As if he should say, this hope did not deceiue *Abraham*. For it was as a kind of resurrection, when *Isaak* was thus deliuered out of the midst of the shadow of death. The Greeke word *Parabole*, which wee translate *figure*, or similitude, is interpreted diuers waies by the expositors. For mine owne part, I take it simply for a word of similitude, as, either after a sort, or such a like speech. For howsoeuer *Isaak* was not raised vp in very deede, yet notwithstanding he seemed after a sort to be raised vp, when hee was suddenly and miraculously deliuered by such an vnexpected fauour of God. Yet I reiect not that which others thinke, to wit, that our flesh which is subiect to death, is shadowed out in the ramme which was put in the place of *Isaak*. I confesse that to bee true also which others teach, that the image of Iesus Christ was painted forth in this offering. But I speake now of that which the Apostle meant to say, and not of all things that might rightly be gathered. Now in my iudgement, the true sense is, that *Abraham* recovered his sonne, euen as if he had been giuen him from death into a new life.

By faith Isaak blessed, &c.] This also was a worke of faith, *Vers. 100.* to giue a blessing concerning things to come. For whereas *Isaak* the thing is not yet effected, but the naked word onely appeares, there faith must needs be said to reigne. But in the first place wee are to obserue what good vse this blessing had of which he speakes. For to blesse, is generally taken to pray that good may come to those for whom we pray. But there was another thing rather in the blessing of *Isaak*; for it was as if he had put the person of his sonne *Iacob* into the possession of that land which God had promised to him, and to his heires. But what of all this? Surely he had nothing

in.

in this land but the right of buriall. These high words then, *Let peoples obey thee, and let the nations doe thee service*, seeme to be ridiculous, Gen. 27. 29. For what authoritie was he able to giue another, who was scarcely free there himselfe? We see then that this blessing is grounded vpon faith, because *Isaak* had nothing to giue his sonnes but the word of God. Yet notwithstanding some may doubt whether there were any faith in the blessing of *Esau*, seeing he was a reprobate, and reiected of God. The solution is easie, because faith did chiefly shew it self in this, when he discerned between the two twins begotten of him, & that in such sort that he gaue the first place to the lesser. For in gouerning himselfe according to the oracle of God, he took away from the eldest the ordinarie right of nature. Now the condition of the whole nation depended vpon this, that *Jacob* was the elect of God, and this election was ratified and confirmed by the blessing of the father.

Obiection.

Answer.

Verf. 21.
Jacob.

[By faith *Jacob* when he was a dying, &c.] The purpose of the Apostle is, to attribute whatsoever came to passe amongst this people and was worthie of memorie, vnto faith: notwithstanding, because it had been a thing too long to recite euery particular example, hee chuseth out some amongst many: as this which hee now reciteth. For the tribe of *Ephraim* did so surmount the others, that they were in a manner hidden vnder his shadow. For the Scripture often comprehends the tenne tribes vnder this name of *Ephraim*: and yet notwithstanding *Ephraim* was the yonger of the two sons of *Ioseph*. When as *Jacob* blessed him and his brother; they were both of them then children. What did *Jacob* see in the yonger that he should preferre him before the elder? nay at that time when he did it, his eyes were euen dimmed by reason of age: and whereas hee put his right hand vpon the head of *Ephraim*, surely it was not by chance or at aduenture: for he crossed his armes, so as he put his right hand vpon the left side. Moreouer, he assignes two portions vnto him, as if he had bin Lord already of that land from whence famine had driuen *Jacob*. There was nothing here therefore which

which was agreeable to reason; but faith, who onely was the gouernesse in this action. If the Iewes therefore would be any thing indeede, let them boast of nothing but of faith. The Iewes despise faith, and yet it was the chiefest vertue their ancestors had.

And worshipped towards the end of his staffe.] This is one of the places by which we may coniecture that the Hebrues in old time had not the vse of prickes or points. For the Greekes could not so farre deceiue themselves, that they should turne *Rodd*, for *Bedd*, if there had been at that time such a manner of writing as there is now at this day. There is no doubt but *Moses* speaks of the bolster of the bed when he saith, *Al Rosch Hamitthab*. But the Greeke translators haue turned it, The end of his staffe, as if it had been there *Matthab*. The Apostile is not nice to applie that vnto his purpose which was commonly receiued. True it is that hee wrote to the Iewes: but it was to them which were dispersed in diuers regions, and had changed their mother tongue into the Greeke. Now we know that the Apostles were not so precise in this respect, but did willingly apply themselves to the weake who had yet neede of milke. Neither is there any danger in it, prouided that the readers be alwaies brought backe to the pure and natiue reading which the Scripture vseth. Now for the thing it selfe, there is no great difference. For *Iacobs* worshipping was a signe of giuing of thanks: wherefore he was led by faith to submit himselfe vnto his sonne.

By faith Ioseph when he died, &c.] This which the Apostile Verf. 22. Ioseph. now recites is the last of all the acts of the Patriarkes: which in very truth is well worthie to be put in writing. For doubtlesse it was a token of an excellent faith, that all these riches, pleasures and honours could not cause this holy personage to forget the promise of God. For from whence is it that he had such a constancie of minde as to despise all that which was in high account here in this world, and y^e he esteemed nothing of all that which was precious in it, but because he ascended into heauen by faith? As touching that which he commandeth for carrying his bones thence, it was not because

cause he had any regard vnto himself therein, as if he should haue a better burying place in Canaan than in Egypt: but his meaning was hereby to prouoke and whet the desire of those of his nation, to the end they might aspire to their deliuerance with the more vehement affection. His meaning was also hereby to confirme their faith, to the end they might haue an assured hope of their deliuerance in the end.

Exod. 2. 2.
* & vers. 16.

23 By faith Moses when he was borne, was hid three moneths of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child, neither feared they the Kings commandement.

Exod. 2. 11.

24 By faith Moses when he was come to age, refused to be called the sonne of Pharaohs daughter,

25 And chose rather to suffer aduersitie with the people of God, than to enioy the pleasures of sinne for a season.

26 Esteeming the rebuke of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect vnto the recompence of the reward.

26 By faith he forsooke Egypt, and feared not the fiercenes of the King: for he endured, as he that saw him which was invisible.

Verse 20.
Moses.

BT faith Moses when he was borne, &c.] There are others also, yea and those euen prophane men who haue kept and preserued their children, and haue put themselves in great danger thereby; yet were they not moued thereunto by any feare of God, but onely of a desire they had to multiply their offspring. But the Apostle shewes that the parents of Moses were moued to keepe their child for another respect, to wit, because God had promised to deliuer them at such time as they should be ouerpressed with seruitude. Resting themselves therefore vpon this confidence; they chose rather to saue the child than their owne liues. But this seemes contrarie to the nature of faith, when hee saith that they were moued hereunto, because they saw he was a proper childe. For wee know that Ishai was reprooued by Samuel, when he represented his children before him according to the

Obiection.

the stature and beautie of euery one of them: 1. Sam. 16. 7. For God would not haue vs busie our selues too much in outward appearances. I answer, that the parents of *Moses* were not so affected with the beautie of their child, as if they were moued thereby to haue compassion to saue and keepe him, as men are ordinarily accustomed to doe: but that there was imprinted in the face of this childe, a mark or signe of his excellencie that was to come, which promised vnto them some singular thing to be performed by him. It is not to be doubted then, but in beholding of him they were stirred vp to hope for some deliuerance at hand, because they trusted that their child was ordained to doe great things.

Now this ought to be of great waight to perswade the Iewes when they heare that *Moses* the minister of their deliuerance, was thus miraculously preserued from death by the meanes of faith. And yet neuerthelesse, the faith which is here so commended, was very weake. For whereas they were bound to haue nourished *Moses*, setting all feare of death aside, they expose him to aduenture. It appeares then that their faith did not onely quickly wauer, but also fainted: at the least wise, they left off to doe their dutie, when they consented to cast the childe vpon the brinke of the river: But we ought to be so much the more encouraged, when we heare tell that howsoeuer faith be infirme and weake, yet it was so approoued of God, that it obtained life for *Moses*, vpon whom the deliuerance of the Church depended.

By faith *Moses* when he was come to age, &c.] The example of *Moses* ought to be remembred of the Iewes before all others, because that by his hand they were freed from seruitude; the couenant of God was renued vnto them, and the estate of the Church confirmed by the publishing of the law. For if faith be the principall thing to be considered in *Moses*, it were an absurd thing, if he should now turne them from faith, to that which is contrarie vnto it. Whence it followes, that they profit very ill by the law, who are not thereby

Answer.

Verf. 24.

They profit ill
by the law,
who are
not there-
by drawn vnto
faith.

thereby drawne vnto faith. But now let vs see what the things are which he praiseth in the faith of *Moses*. First of all he saith, that being come to age, he had this vertue of faith, to refuse to be called the adopted sonne of *Pharaohs* daughter. He makes mention of his age, because if he had done it beeing a childe, it might haue beene imputed either to lightnesse, or ignorance. For in regard there is no reason nor counsell in children, they expose themselues to their owne hurt altogether at randon: And yong men also are often carried hither and thither by an inconsiderate heat of blood. To the end therefore we might know that *Moses* did nothing vnwisely, or what he had not forethought himselfe of long before, the Apostle telleth vs that he was now at mans state: the which we may also clearly perceiue by the history.

- Now it is said, that he refused the adoption of *Pharaohs* daughter: first, because when he went to visit his brethren, he endeauoured to succour them: Secondly, he reuenged their wrōgs: al which things tended to this end, to shew that he rather desired to returne to them of his own nation, than to continue in the court of the king. This was as much then as if of his owne free motion he had willingly reiected all. The Apostle attributes this vnto faith, because it had beene better for him in respect of outward things, to haue remained in Egypt; but he was perswaded that the stocke of *Abrahams* was blessed: of the which blessing the onely bare promise of God bare witness. For he saw no testimonie thereof before his eies, neither yet any thing neere vnto it. Whence it appears, that he beheld that by faith, which was farre remooued from his sight.

The commen-
dation of Mo-
ses faith.

Verf. 26.

Esteeming the rebuke of Christ, &c.] Wee must diligently obserue this phrase of speech, for by it we are taught to flie from all that which we cannot obtaine without offending of God, as from a deadly poyson. For he calles the pleasures of sinne, all the allurements of the world which doe turne vs away from God, and from that vocation to which he hath called vs. For those earthly commodities that respect this life, which yet with a good conscience, and by the permissi-

on

on of God we may enioy; are not comprehended in this number: wherefore let vs alwaies remember to discern what God permits vs as lawfull. Notwithstanding there are many things which of themselves are lawfull; the vse whereof is forbidden vs in regard of circumstance of time, place; or for some other respects. And therefore we must alwaies consider this in all the commodities of this present life, to wit, that they serue vs as helps, and furtherances to follow God, and not as lets and hindrances.

He calles the *delights of sinne temporarie*, because they doe incontinently vanish away with the life. And against them he sets the *rebuke of Christ*, which all the faithfull ought willingly to receiue into their bosomes. For whom God hath chosen, them hath he also predestinate to be made like vnto the image of his sonne. Not that he exerciseth them all alike with the same reproches, or with the same kinde of crosse; but because all ought to be so disposed, that they refuse not to be companions with Christ in bearing of the crosse. Let euery one of vs then consider with himselfe wher-vnto he is called by this communion; to the ende he may cut off all impediments and difficulties. For we must not lightly passe it ouer, that he calls all the disgraces which the faithfull haue endured from the beginning of the world, by the title of the *rebukes of Christ*. Because euen as they were members of one selfe same bodie with vs, so also were they in nothing seperated from vs. True it is, that all anguishes encombrances, as they are the rewards of sinne; so are they also fruites of that malediction which was imposed vpon the first man: but all the wrongs which we endure of the wicked for the name of Christ, are reputed of him as his owne: and for this cause S. Peter reioyceth that he in his flesh did fulfill that which was wanting of the afflictions of Christ. Col. 1. 24. And if we consider of this as we ought, it shall not be so grievous nor painefull vnto vs, to suffer and indure for Christ.

Where he saith, *that he chose rather to suffer afflictions with the people of god*, by that member he yet better signifies vnto vs, what:

what he meanes by this rebuke of Christ. *Moses* could not otherwise declare that he was one of Gods people, but in making himselfe a companion of the miseries of his people. Wherefore, as oft as we haue this resolution to cleaue fast vnto the body of the Church without separation, let vs know that whatsoeuer we indure is consecrated in the name of our head Christ. And thus on the contrarie he calles those *The treasures of Egypt*, which we cannot otherwise possesse, but by renouncing the Church of God.

For he had respect to the recompence of the reward.] Hee prooues by the description of faith which he hath made, that this his constant courage of *Moses*, was a fruit thereof; in regard that he fixed his eies vpon the promise of God. For he had no reason to thinke he should hope to finde a better estate among the people of Israel, than amongst the Egyptians; vnlesse hee had put his confidence in the onely promise of God. If any shall here inferre vpon this speech, that faith rests not it selfe vpon the onely mercie of God, because it hath respect to the recompence: I answer, the question is not here of righteousness, nor of the cause of saluation; but the Apostle comprehends in generall all that which agrees with faith. So then, when we speake of seeking righteousness before God; faith then hath no respect to the recompence of reward, but to the free goodnesse of God: it respects not workes then; but Christ onely. But out of the cause of iustification, because faith hath an eie generally vnto all the word of God, it hath also respect in this sense vnto the reward which is promised. By faith, I say, we doe willingly receiue and imbrace whatsoeuer God hath promised. Now seeing he hath promised reward vnto workes: faith then apprehends this reward. But none of all this hath any place in the matter of free iustification. For we can not hope for any recompence at all, vnlesse the free imputation of righteousness goe before.

By faith he forsooke Egypt, &c.] This may be expounded as well of his first comming out, as of his second; at what time he brought the people out with him. For then properly he for-

*Obiection.
Answer.*

*When faith
respects the
promise, and
when it re-
spects the re-
compence or
reward.*

Verf. 27.

forsooke Egypt, when he fled from the house of *Pharaoh*. Adde also that the Apostle recites this going forth, before he speakes of the celebration of the Pasleouer. It seemes then that he meaneth the flight of *Moses*. Neither is that repugnant vnto this which he addeth, of *not fearing the kings fiercenesse*: although on the contrarie *Moses* himselfe witnesseth, that he was mooued to flie for feare. For if we consider the beginning, he feared not when he declared himselfe to be the protector of the people. Notwithstanding, when I waigh all things rightly, I had rather referre it to his second departure. For then he despised the outrageousnesse of the king boldly, beeing armed with such a power of Gods spirit, that often times of his owne motion he was the first that prouoked and defied this madde beast. And doubtlesse it was an admirable vertue of faith in him, that hee durst draw after him such a multitude; none, not one of them exercised in warre, and besides laden with much baggage, and yet he hoped that the hand of God would make him wade through the middest of so innumerable difficulties, as presented themselues before him. He saw this mightie king to be enraged and carried away with furie, and knew also very well that he would not cease till he had done all he was able to doe: yet notwithstanding because he knew that God was the author of his departure, he commended the successe thereof to him, and doubted not but he would well enough suppress all the stormings of the Egyptians in due season.

For he endured, as he that saw him that was inuisible.] But *Moses* in very deed had seene God before in the middest of the fierie bush: and therefore it seemes that this is spoken improperly, and from the purpose, as touching the present matter. I confesse indeede, that *Moses* was confirmed by this vision before he enterprised this so laudable a worke of deliuering the people: but I denie that this beholding of God was such, that it vtterly tooke away from him all sense of the flesh, so as to drawe him out of the dangers of this world. God then onely shewed him a signe of his presence:

T

but

*Moses faith
was often
mingled with
the infirmities
of the flesh.*

*The nature of
faith descri-
bed.*

- 1
- 2
- 3

but he was farre off from seeing God such as he was indeed. The Apostle therefore meaneth that *Moses* was no lesse imboldened, than if beeing rauished vp into heauen he had set God onely before his eies : or as hauing nothing to doe with men, neither beeing subiect vnto the perils of this present life, he went on manfully as if hee had not beene to fight with *Pharaoh*. Yet notwithstanding, it is very certaine, that he was sometimes couered ouer with so many difficulties, as they made him thinke in his minde that God was farre off from him: or at the least, that the obstinacie of the king furnished with so many helps to resist, should overcome him in the ende. To be short, God did shewe himselfe in such wise to *Moses* fight, as yet in the meane while hee left place for faith : but *Moses* beeing enuironed on eue-ry side with all those feares which pressed vpon him at his heeles, yet turned his minde, and all his senses to God. True it is, that this vision wherof we haue spoken did greatly aide him to this businesse: but yet he saw more in God, than the sight of this visible signe could helpe him vnto. For he apprehended his power, which was sufficient to swallow vp al feares and dangers. For resting himselfe vpon the promise, he held it for certaine that the people were already Lords of the promised land, howsoeuer they were now oppressed vnder the tyrannie of the Egyptians. From hence we gather, first, that it is the true nature of faith to set God alwaies before our eies. Secondly, that faith regardeth things more high, and hidden in God, than those which our senses are able to comprehend. Thirdly, that the onely beholding of God is sufficient to correct our tenderneffe, and to make vs to be more hard then stones or iron to beate backe all the assaults of Satan. Whence it followes, that by how much the more a man is delicate and effeminate, so much the lesse is his faith.

Exod. 12.21.

28 Through faith he ordained the Passener, and the effusion of blood, least he that destroyed the first borne, should touch them.

29 By

29 By faith they passed through the red sea as by drie land, Exod. 14. 22.
which when the Egyptians assailed to doe, they were swallowed
vp.

30 By faith the walles of Iericho fell downe after they were Iosh. 6. 20.
compassed about seven daies. Iosh. 6. 23.

31 By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them which & 2. 1.
obeyed not, when she had receiued the spies peaceably.

By faith he ordained, &c.] This also ought to serue much Ver. 28.
for the recommendation of faith vnto the Iewes, be-
cause they hold this sacrifice of the Passecouer for the most
excellent of al others, and haue it in greatest reuerence. Now
euen this so excellent a sacrifice he saith was celebrated by
faith: not so much because this Lambe was a figure of
Christ, as in regard that when hee sprinkled the two doore
posts with the blood; the fruit thereof did not yet appeare.
Wherefore, seeing the truth was hidden from him, it was
needfull that he should waite for it by faith. And yet which
more is, it might seeme a plain mockerie that *Moses* should
oppose a few drops of blood as a remedie against the ven-
geance of God: but he contenting himselfe with the onely
word of God, doubted not but the people should be deli-
uered from the plague which was neere at hand to ceaze
vpon the Egyptians. It is not without cause therefore you
see that the Apostle commends his faith in this behalfe.
Those who expound that the Passecouer was celebrated by
faith, because *Moses* looked vnto Christ; doe say very true:
but the Apostle makes mention simply of faith here, be-
cause it rested in the word of God alone, when as yet the
fruite appeared not. Away with curious speculations there-
fore, for wee haue nothing to doe with them in this place.
Where he saith, that *Moses* onely ordained the Passecouer, the
reason is; because God ordained it by his hand.

By faith they passed through the red sea, &c.] It is very cer- Ver. 29.
tain that there were many vnbeleeuers amōg this so great a
multitude: but the Lord granted this to y^e faith of a few, that
the whole flocke did thus passe through y^e red sea drie shod.

For in this there was great difference between the Israelites and the Egyptians: why? the Israelites passed through in safetie; the others were by and by after drowned. Whence came this difference, but that the Iewes had receiued the word of God, whereof the others were destitute? It is an argument then taken from things contrarie, when hee saith, that *the Egyptians were swallowed up*. For this wofull issue was the punishment of their boldnes: as on the contrarie the children of Israel were saued, because they resting vpon the word of God, made no difficultie to passe through the midst of the great gulfes of water.

Verf. 30.

By faith the Wall of Iericho, &c.] Euen as he hath heretofore taught that the yoke of seruitude was broken by faith; so also he now teacheth that by the same faith the people entred into the possession of the heritage which was promised them. For at their first artiuall in the land they met with the citie of Iericho, which was so well furnished, and so invincible, as might haue hindred them to passe further, in regard they had no meanes to winne it. The Lord commanded that the men of warre should compasse about the walls of it every day once: and on the seventh day, seven times. This compassing was but like a childish pastime for men to laugh at; yet neuerthelesse they obeyed the commandment of God, and lost not their labour: for it came to passe according as God had before promised them. Certaine it is that the wals of Iericho fell not by y^e crie or noise of men, neither by the sound of Trumpets; but because the people hoped for the accomplishment of that which God had promised to fulfil. We are also to apply this to our profit. For we are none otherwise deliuered from the tyrannie of the diuel, neither are we called to the libertie of y^e sons of God, otherwise thā by faith: for by it alone we overcome our enemies, and throw downe to the ground all the munitions of hell.

Verf. 31.
Rahab.

By faith Rahab the harlot, &c.] Although this example may seeme to be lesse notable at the first blush, and almost vnworthie to bee put in this ranke, by reason of the estate and condition of this woman: yet notwithstanding the A-

pofle

posse alleageth it very fitly, and for good cause. Hitherto he hath shewed that the Patriarkes to whom the Iewes bare great honour and reuerence, did nothing worthie of praise but by faith: and that whatsoever benefits they receiued of God worthie of memorie, were so many effects of the same faith. But now hee sheweth that a woman, a stranger, and not onely of base condition among those of her owne nation, but being an harlot, was yet engrafted into the bodie of the Church by faith. Whence it follows that they which are the most excellent above others, are in no estimation for all that with God, if they be not esteemed of him by faith: and on the contrary, that those who before were scarce worthie of any place among the prophane and wicked, yet by faith are receiued into fellowship with the Angels. Moreouer, Saint *Lames* also giues testimonie of the faith of *Rahab*, Iam. 2. 25: and it is easie to gather out of the holy historie, that this woman had a true faith. For she protests that she held that for a most sure thing which God had promised to the Israelites: and desireth to haue her life saued, and her parents liues also: as if the Israelites had already obtained the victorie, which yet durst not enter into the land, because of the feare which they had: now in all these things shee considered not men, but God. One testimonie of this faith is, that she lodged the spies with the danger of her owne life. Thus then by the meanes of faith she escaped safe from the common destruction of the whole citie.

The word *harlot*, is put to set out the grace of God. There are some which turne this Hebrue word *Zona*, Hostesse, as if she had got her liuing by keeping victualling, or a tauerne. But seeing the Scripture doth euery where vse this word for harlot, there is no reason which enduceth vs to interpret it otherwise in this place. The Iewish Rabbins haue imagined a constrained Etymologie, and all because it seemed an vn-beseeming and dishonest thing for them of their nation, if it should be said that the spies lodged in the house of an harlot. But wee neede not feare that: for this Epithite *Zona* is therefore expressly put in the historie of *Rahab*, to the end

we might know that the spies came secretly into the citie of Iericho, and that in the same they were hid in the house of an harlot. Although it is certaine that this is referred to her life past: because her faith giues testimonie of her repentance.

Iudg. 6. 11.

& 4. 6 & 13. 24

& 11. 1. & 12. 7.

32 And what shall I more say? for the time would be too short for me to tell of Gedeon, of Barac, and of Sampson, and of Iephth, also of David, and Samuel, and of the Prophets:

33 Which through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained the promises, stopped the mouthes of lions,

34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, of weak were made strong, waxed valiant in battell, turned to flight the armies of the aliens:

35 The women received their dead raised to life: other also were racked and would not be deliuered, that they might receiue a better resurrection.

Verf. 32.

And what shall I say more?] Fearing least if hee should stand to reckon vp euery particular example, he might thereby restraints the praises of faith but to a very few; hee breaks off, and saith, I should neuer make an end, if I should recite all of them one by one; seeing those few which hee hath already mentioned, may bee extended to the whole Church of God. And first he notes the time which was betweene Iosuah and David, during the which God raised vp Iudges to gouerne his people: which were these foure whereof he makes mention, to wit, Gedeon, Barac, Sampson, and Iephth. As concerning Gedeon; was it not a thing ridiculous in the eyes of flesh and blood; that he should goe to assaile an infinite armie of enemies, with three hundred men onely? and what was the breaking of the pitchers in their hands? Surely a very fond thing, fit in all reason to serue to fray little children onely. In like manner the forces that Barac had, were farre inferiour to the strength of his enemies: and besides, he was onely gouerned by the counsell of a filliceweake woman. Sampson being but a countrie man, and exercised

Gedeon.

Barac.

Sampson.

exercised in no other weapons than with tillage and husbandrie; what was such a one able to doe, think you, against so proud conquerours, that hee should bring all the people into subiection vnto him by his power? And as for *Iephthē*, *Iephthē*. who would not euen at the first haue condemned his enterprise of rashnes, seeing he promised to maintaine a people, where their state was in a manner remediless? But because all these personages followed the calling, and leading of God, and rested themselues vpon his promise, executing the charge that was enioyned them, they all doe receiue their due commendation by the testimonie of the holy Ghost. So then, whatsoeuer they did which deserved praise, that the *Imperfections* Apostle attributes to faith: although there was not one of *are in the best* them whose faith wauered not. *Gedeon* was too too backward to take armes; and durst not commit himselfe vnto God, but with great difficulties. *Barac* was so timorous and fearefull euen from the beginning, that hee was inforced to do his dutie by *Debora*, and that not without some disgrace vnto him. *Sampson*, overcome by the flatteries of his concubine, did vndiscreetly betray both his owne and the peoples safetie. *Iephthē* being too rash in vowing his foolish vow, and being too obttinate in the performance of it, dishonoured and disgraced his excellent victorie which hee obtained by the cruell death of his daughter.

Thus we shall alwaies finde something in the Saints worthie of reprehension: and yet notwithstanding the imperfections of their faith, it doth not therefore cease for all that to be approoued of God. Wherefore we are not to be discouraged by reason of the vices wherewithall wee are incumbered, neither yet thereby to become secure and carelesse, *The faith of the Saints acceptable vnto God, albeit it was mingled with many imperfections.* provided that we by faith do hold on our course in following our vocation. *And of David.* Vnder *Dauids* name hee *David*. comprehends all the faithfull Kings; with whom also he ioynes *Samuel* and the Prophets. In which words his meaning is to shew that the kingdome of Iudah was established by faith, and by the same faith endured vnto the end. The many victories which *David* had over his enemies, were all *Samuel*. notable.

notable. The integritie of *Samuel*, and his great wisedome in governing the people, was well knowne. The benefits also which God bestowed vpon holy Kings and Prophets, were things all apparant. The Apostle affirms that there were none of all these things which ought not to be attributed to faith.

Now among an infinite number of the benefits of God he onely toucheth some; to the end that frō this, the Iewes might gather in generall, that as God hath alwaies maintained and preserved his Church by faith: so also there was no other meanes neither for them then, nor for vs now, whereby we may feele the same goodnes towards vs. How often did *David* returne to his house with victorie ouer his enemies? *Ezechias* from sicknes recovered health: *Daniel* came forth of the denne of Lions safe and sound: his companions walked ioyfully in the midst of the fierie furnace, with no lesse delight than if they had been in a medow couered with cold dew. If faith were the cause of all this, wee must conclude that there is none other means to giue place to the manifestation of the goodnesse of God towards vs, but faith.

Ezechias.

Daniel.

Shadrach,

Mesack, and

Abednego.

Verf. 33.

This member ought specially to be noted, where he saith, that they obtained the promises by faith. For howsoeuer God continueth faithfull and true of his word; although all of vs should become Infidels; yet notwithstanding wee are to know that infidelitie causeth the promises to become vnprofitable vnto vs: that is, to say, wee shall not feele them effectually in vs.

Verf. 34.

Of weakes were made strong ¶ *Chrysostome* referreth this word to another signification: to wit, that the Iewes were brought out of captiuitie, wherein they were as men without hope. But for mine own part I mislike not that it should be vnderstood of *Ezechias*, *Isai.* 38. although wee may also stretch it further: that is to wit, that the Lord hath with his hand exalted the faithfull on high, as often as they were humbled and brought low, and that he so succoured their infirmities, that they were clothed anew, as it were, with a perfect

perfect strength and courage.

The women, &c. As touching the women which receiued their dead raised to life, we may vnderstand it of those two widdowes, whose children were raised vp by *Elias* and *Elisha*, 1. Kings, 17. 22. and in the second booke, chap. 4. 35. Some were racked; he but erewhile reckoned vp many happy issues, by which God rewarded the faith of those that were his: now he entreth into a diuers discourse: to wit, that the Saints beeing brought to the extremitie of all miseries, yet notwithstanding by faith resisted, and stood steadfast; so as they perseuered inuincible euen vnto the death. Truly it might seeme at the first viewe, that these things were much different one from another: to wit, that those before named, should so gloriously triumph, hauing victorie ouer their enemies; that God should preferue them by diuers miracles; that they were deliuered from the gates of death, by strange, and vnwonted meanes: and that these latter, should be so shamefully intreated, that almost the whole world did spitte in their faces; beeing consumed with pouertie, and hated of all; insomuch, that they were constrained to hide themselves within the caves of beasts: lastly, that they should be ledde to cruell and horrible torments. For it seemes that they were utterly left destitute of Gods helpe, when he thus exposed them to the rage and crueltie of infidels.

Is not here a great difference then thinke you? yet notwithstanding faith raigneth as well in the one sort, as in the other, and hath an equall vertue in both: nay which more is, it sheweth more cleerely in these latter. For the victorie of faith is more noble in contemning of death, than if a mans life were prolonged to a fifth age. It is a more excellent effect of faith, and more worthy of praise to indure reproaches, pouertie, and all externall anguishes patiently & constantly; than to recouer health, or to obtaine some other like benefit of God by a miracle.

The summe is, that the strength and constancie of the Saints, in what time soeuer it shewed forth it selfe, was a worke of faith, because our infirmities are so great, that we are vnable

Verf. 35.

The exposition of the rest of this verse comes in after the exposition of the 36. and 37. verses.

Those that are
indued with a
sauiug faith,
shall neuer be
destituted of
patience.

vnable to ouercome aduersities, vnlesse faith doe sustaine & vphold vs. And hereof we gather, that all those that haue a true confidence in God, are furnished with such a power, as is sufficient for them to resist, and stand steadfast by what meanes soeuer Satan shall assaile them: and especially that we shall neuer want patience to indure afflictions, if so bee we haue faith: as also on the contrarie it is a sure marke that we are overcome of infidelitie, when we faint and quaille in the time of persecutions, & of the crosse. For the nature of faith is the same at this day, that it was long agoe in the holy fathers, of whom the Apostle maketh mention in this place. Wherefore if we follow the example of their faith, we shall not fall so fowlie as we doe by our slouthfulnesse. As touching the word *racked*, I haue therein followed the translation of *Erasmus*: although others do expound it, *Dismembered*: but in mine opinion the sense is more simple: to wit, that they were racked, as one would stretch a skinn vpon a drumme.

36 And others haue beene tried by mockings, and scorings, yea moreouer by bonds, and imprisonment.

or, *serued*.

37 They were stoned, they were beheaded asunder, they were tempted, they were slaine with the sword, they wandred vp and downe in sheepes skinnes, and in goates skinnes, beeing destitute, afflicted, and tormented.

38 Whom the world was not wortbie of: they wandred in wildernesses, and mountaines, and dennes, and canes of the earth.

39 And these all through faith obtained good report, and receiued not the promise,

40 God prouiding a better thing for vs, that they without vs should not be made perfect.

Verf. 36.

Whereas he saith they were *tempted*, it seemeth superfluous: and I make no doubt, but because there is great affinitie in the Greeke tongue betweene these two words, *cut asunder*, and *Tempted*, that some tooke occasion thereby

thereby, being not well exercised in y language, to adde the second in the margine : and so by succession of time, it hath since crept into y text : as also *Erasmus* deemeth. *By the skins of sheepe, and goates*, I thinke he rather meaneth the base and couerle garments of the faithfull, wherewith they were clad, when they fled into the deserts, than the tents which were made of skinnes. Now although some say that *Jeremiah* was stoned, *Isaiah* sawed asunder, and that the holy historie telleth how *Elias*, and *Elizans*, and other Prophets wandred into mountaines and caues : yet notwithstanding I doubt not, but he toucheth those cruell and horrible persecutions, which *Antiochus* inflicted vpon the people of God, and those which befell them soone after.

And would not be deliuered.] He speaketh very properly. Verse 35. For they must haue denied God to redeeme a little prolonging of this life. Now this had beene too wofull a redemption. And therefore, to liue perpetually in heauen; they renounced this worldly life : which otherwise they must haue bought at so deere a rate, as thereby to renounce God (as we haue said) and to forsake their vocation. But we heare what Christ saith ; if we will saue our liues in this world, we shall loose them for euer in the world to come. Matth. 10. 39. Wherefore, if so be that a true loue of the resurrection to come, doe possesse our hearts, it wil easily bring vs to the contemning of death. And to say truth, wherefore should we otherwise liue, vnlesse we liue to God? and whensoever it shall not be permitted vs to liue vnto him; we ought to suffer death willingly, or at the least without grieve of minde.

Death is to be chosen rather then life, if we cannot enjoy it but with the forsaking of God.

Furthermore by this sentence the Apostle confirms that which he said, to wit, that the Saints ouercame all sorts of torments by faith. For if their hearts had not bin sustained by the hope of the blessed resurrection, they should by and by haue fallen and quailed. Moreouer, we ought to gather a very profitable exhortation from hence, whereby we may fortifie our faith against the time of aduersitie. For we ought not to refuse that the Lord should make vs companions

The care of
God is alwaies
alike towards
his Church.

Verf. 38.

nions with so many holy personages, whom we know to haue beene exercised and laden with so many miseries. The question is not here of the miseries of a small number of people, but the common persecutions of the whole church: and not of a yeare or two, but which haue endured sometimes from the grandfathers to their childrens children. We must not maruell then, if it be the good pleasure of God to prooue our faith at this day with the same trialls: neither must we thinke, when these things come to passe, that we shall be forsaken: no our God, whom wee know had care of the holy fathers, which endured the same things before vs; will be no lesse carefull of vs, then of them.

Whom the World was not worthy of. When the holy Prophets wandred thus amongst wilde beasts, it might seeme that they were vnworthy to liue vpon the earth. For what was the reason they could finde no place amongst men? But the Apostle turnes the case cleane contrarie: to wit, that the *World was not worthy of them*. For in what part of the world soeuer the faithfull seruants of God came, they carried with them his blessing, as a smell of sweete odours. Thus Potiphars house was blessed for *Iosephs* sake: Gen. 39. 5. and Sodome also had beene saued, if tenne iust men had beene found in it. So then, although the world doe reiect and cast out the seruants of God, as the rubbish and offskouring of the same, yet ought the world to esteeme it among the punishments thereof, that it cannot endure them: for they alwaies bring some blessing of God vpon the world with the. Therefore as oft as the righteous are taken out thence, let vs know that they are so many foretellings of some euill to come: and that we are vnworthy of their company; as also that they should not perish with vs. Isai: 57. 1. In the meane while the faithfull haue ample matter of consolation to comfort them withall, although they be chased out of the world as beasts; seeing they perceiue that the like befell to the Prophets, who found more humanitie and gentlenesse euen among those vnreasonable creatures, than amongst men. Saint *Hillarie* comforted himselfe with this consideration,

tion, when he saw the Church oppressed by cruell tyrants, who had then the Emperour of Rome at their commandment: to serue them as their slaughter man: this good personage (I say) called that to minde which the Apostle here reciteth of the Prophets. The mountains and the Forrests, saith he, the dungeons and prisons are more safe for me, than the great glistring of the temples: for whilest the Prophets remained in those Forrests, or whilest they were cast into deep dungeons, they prophesied by the spirit of God. Now we ought also in like manner to be of such courage, that we be constant in contemning the world: and if it cast vs out as things which it can in no sort digest; let vs know that we goe forth of a deadly gulfe; and that God by this meanes provides for our saluation: to the ende we should not be ouerwhelmed within a bottomlesse depth of perdition.

*S. Hillarie
found more sa-
fety in Forrests
and moun-
taines, than a-
mongst men.*

*A comfort for
the exiled.*

All these through faith, &c.] This is an argument from the lesse to the greater. For if they which had not yet receiued so great a light of grace, did indure aduersities with such an excellent constancie, how much more efficacie ought such a liuely sun-shine of the Gospel to haue in vs than in them? A very little sparkle of light led them to heauen: and now, seeing the sunne of righteousness shineth vnto vs in his brightnesse, what colour of excuse can we haue, if we yet be fast glued to the earth? This is the Apostles true meaning. I know that *Chrysostom* and some others doe expound it otherwise: but the scope of the place doth euidently shewe that he here toucheth the difference betweene the grace which God shewed to the faithfull vnder the law, and that which he now at this day sheweth vnto vs. For seeing hee hath shedde his grace more abundantly vpon vs; it were a shame that we should haue lesse faith than they. Hee saith then, that these Fathers who had so excellent a faith, had nothing so ample matter to ground the same on, as we haue. And he by and by addes the reason; because, saith he, Gods will was that we both should make one bodie: and therefore hee distributed vnto them a small portion of his grace, to the ende he might deferre the full perfection to our times, that is to say, till the comming of Christ. And this is a singular testimonie

Verf. 39.

Verf. 40.

testimonie of Gods kindnesse towards vs, that howsoever he hath shewed himselfe liberall to his children from the beginning of the world, yet he did so measure out and limit his grace, that he provided for the saluation of the whole bodie. What can any amongst vs desire more, when we may say euery one in particular; God hath had as much care of me now, as he had in bestowing of his benefits vpon *Abraham, Moses, David*; yea vpon all the Patriarks, Prophets, and faithfull Kings: euen of me, I say, to the end I might be vnited with them into the bodie of Christ? Let vs know then that wee are more than vnthankfull towards God, if he find lesse faith in vs vnder the kingdom of Christ, than the Fathers shewed themselues to haue vnder the law, and that by so many singular examples of patience. Where he saith, *they receiued not the promise*; it ought to bee vnderstood of the shutting vp and last conclusion of the promises which are published to vs in Christ. Of which we haue said somewhat before.

CHAP. XII.

1 *Wherefore let vs also, seeing we are compassed with so great a cloude of witnesses, cast away euery thing that presseth downe, and the sinne that hangeth so fast on: let vs runne with patience the race that is set before vs,*

2 *Looking vnto Iesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the ioy that was set before him, endured the crosse and despised the shame, and is set at the right hand of the throne of God.*

3 *Wherefore consider him that endured such speaking against of sinners, least you should be wearied and faint in your mindes.*

Verf. 1.

THis is the conclusion and shutting vp of the former Chapter, wherein he sheweth to what end he hath made rehearfall of this Catalogue of the holy seruants of God, whose faith was so excellent vnder the Law: to wit, to the end

end that every one might dispose himselfe to follow their steps. Now he calleth a great multitude, *a clowde*; by a borrowed speech: for a multitude is the opposite to few. Truly although they had been but a small number; yet ought we to be stirred vp by their example, much more when there is so great a clowde of them. Herewithall he saith, that *wee are compassed about* with this thicknes, or multitude, so that whithersoever we turne our eyes, wee still meete with many examples of faith. As touching this word *witnesses*, I take it not so generally as if he called them Martyrs of God; but I rather referre it to the present matter: as if he should haue said, that faith is sufficiently approoued by their witnes; so as there needes no more doubtings thereof now. For the vertues of the Saints, are as so many witnesses to confirme our faith, to the end wee hauing them for our leaders and companions, might goe vnto God the more cheerefully, and couragiously.

Let vs cast away every thing that presseth downe.] Because he vseth a similitude taken from running in a race, he would also that wee should discharge our selues of all impediments. For nothing is more contrarie vnto him that would make haste, than to be loden and pressed downe with burthens. Now there are diuers burthens which doe hinder vs, and slaken our spirituall course: as first the loue of this life: the pleasures of this world: the lusts of the flesh: the cares for earthly things: riches, honours, and all such things of these kindes. Whosoever then will runne in this race of Christ, let him before all things cast off all impediments. For wee are of our selues but too slow and heauie; though we should meete with no pulbackes elsewhere. And yet it is not simply commanded vs, to cast away our riches, or other commodities of this present life, but so farre forth as they slaken our course, because wee feeble them vpon vs as cordes whereby Satan would pull vs backe, and binde vs hand and foote. We know that this metaphor of *running*, is much vsed in the Scripture: but he speakes not here of euery kinde of race, but of such a manner of pastime and exercise

*Burthens slack-
ing our spiri-
tuall race.*

1

2

3

4

5

cise

cise where many stroue who should runne best : in which one puts forth his strength more than if he should goe, or runne alone by himselfe. The summe then is, that wee are entred into the lists, yea into an honourable and much frequented race : where there are also on euery side standers by present in great numbers ; the Sonne of God being the chiefeest there, who inuites and exhorts vs to winne the prize : it were therefore great shame for vs to faint, or become slack in the middle of our course. Now, howsoeuer the holy personages of whom he makes mention, are not onely witnesses, but companions also of the same race ; who doe as it were point vs out the way : yet neuerthelesse he chose rather to call them witnesses, than runners in the race ; thereby shewing vs that they be not such runners as doe enuie vs, or which would hinder vs to carrie away the prize : but that they stand there rather as approuers of our diligence, who are glad of our victories, and doe greatly reioyce therein. And Christ also not only sets the garland before vs, but also therewithal reacheth out his hand to furnish vs with strength and valour. In a word, it is he which prepares and fits vs to begin the race, and by his power carries vs home to the marke.

And sinne which hangeth so fast on.] This is the heauiest burthen wherewithall we are hindred. Now he saith that we are *insnared*, to the end we might know that no man is fit to runne this course, vnlesse hee discharge himselfe of these snares. He speakes not of outward or actuall sinnes, as they call them, but euen of the very fountaine ; that is to say, of concupiscence, which so tyrannizeth ouer euery part of mā, that he feesles himselfe hampred on euery side with these snares. *With patience.* By this word we are alwaies admonished what the principall thing is which the Apostle would haue vs to cōsider in faith : to wit, that in spirit we seek the kingdom of God, which is inuisible to the flesh, & surmounts all our senses. For those that imploy their time about such meditations, doe easily despise all earthly things. And thus he could no way better turne the eyes of the Iewes from do-
ting

ting vpon their ceremonies, than to bring them to the true exercises of faith, by which they might learne that the kingdom of Christ was spirituall; farre excellling the beggerly rudiments of this world.

Who for the ioy, &c.] He signifies that howsoeuer it was in the power of Christ to haue freed himselfe from all anguishes and troubles; and to haue led an happie life, abounding in all sorts of good things: yet that he chose willingly to endure a most painfull, cruell, and shamefull death. Touching this clause, *for the ioy*, it is as much as if he should haue said, In stead of the ioy: and the word *joy*, comprehends vnder it all manner of commodities. Now he saith they were set before him, because he had them in his hand, so as if it had pleased him, he might haue vsed the. But if any man thinke this word *for*, signifies the finall cause; I do not much gainsay him: and so the sense will be, that Christ refused not the death of the crosse, because he saw the issue would be blessed and happie. Yet notwithstanding for mine owne part I incline to the first sense. Now hee commends the patience of Christ for two causes: first, in respect that he endured a most bitter and sharpe death: secondly, in regard that *he despised the shame* and ignominie of it. And afterwards he recites the glorious end of this his death, because the faithfull might know that all the euils which they endure, doe also turne vnto their glorie and saluation, if so bee they follow Christ. To the very same purpose *S. James* saith, You haue heard of the patience of *Iob*, and haue knowne what end the Lord made with him, chap. 5. 11. The Apostle signifies then that all our miseries shall haue no worse successe, than Christ his miseries had: according to that which *S. Paul* saith, If we suffer with him, we shall also reigne with him, 2. Tim. 2. 12.

Wherefore consider him, &c.] He amplifies his exhortation; making a comparison of Christ with vs. For if the Sonne of God, whom all ought to adore, entred into so hard a combat of his owne free will, which of vs dare refuse to submit himselfe thereunto with him? For this onely meditation

ought to suffice to overcome all temptations, to wit, when we heare that wee are companions with the Sonne of God; and that he which was so high and excellent aboue vs, was content to humble himselfe to so base and vile a condition as ours is: that by his example, he might giue vs both boldnes and courage. By this meanes, I say, wee ought to take heart of grace; whereas without this wee runne out, and, as you would say, cast our selues headlong into despaire.

Prou. 3. 11.

4 Ye haue not yet resisted vnto blood, striving against sinne.
5 And ye haue forgotten the consolation which speaketh vnto you as vnto children, My sonne, despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither faint when thou art rebuked of him.

6 For whom the Lord loneth, he chasteneth; and he scourgeth euery sonne that he receineth.

7 If ye indure chastening, God offresh himselfe vnto you as vnto sonnes: for what sonne is it whom the father chasteneth not?

8 If therefore ye be without correction, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sonnes.

Verf. 4.

Afflictions are
soueraigne co-
rasives to eate
out our corrup-
tions.

YE haue not yet, &c.] He passeth on forwards: for he admonisheth vs that wee euen then doe fight against sin; when the vnbelleeuers doe persecute vs for the name of Christ. Christ indeede could not enter into this combate, because he was pure and free from all sinne: but we are not like vnto him in this behalfe: because sinne alway dwells in vs: afflictions therefore are as soueraigne corasives to eate out and to subdue our finnes. First we know that all the miseries that befall vs in this world comes of sinne, and especially death it selfe. Yet notwithstanding that is not the thing which the Apostle now dealeth withall: onely he teacheth, that the persecutions which we sustaine for the Gospels sake are profitable vnto vs for another end, to wit, because they are made remedies to destroy sinne in vs. For by this meanes God drawes vs in vnder the yoke of his discipline, and vnder the rule of his Commandements; to the
end

end our flesh should not waxe wanton & rebellious : sometimes also he bridles vs and holds vs in order by this means, when we grow vnruely : sometimes he punisheth our faults, to make vs rake better heede for the time to come. Whether then that he kill our vices hereby, or whether hee preuent vs before we sin ; yet he thus exerciseth vs in this fight against sinne, which the Apostle here mentioneth. True it is, the Sonne of God doth vs this honour ; that he counts not that which wee endure for his Gospels sake among the punishments of sinne : yet it is our dutie neuerthelesse to acknowledge that which the Apostle here telleth vs : to wit, that wee so maintaine and defend the quarrell of Christ against the gainsayers, y yet in the meane while we also fight against sinne, which is an enemy dwelling vnder the same rooſe with vs. Thus you see how God sheweth vs a double fauour, when hee makes the remedies which he applieth to heale our corruptions, serue for the maintenance of his Gospel. But we are yet to obserue what manner of persons they were to whom he here speaketh, euen to those that had patiently borne the losse of their goods, and endured many outrages. And yet notwithstanding hee taxeth them with slothfulnes, for that they waxing wearie in the middle of the fight, did not valiantly perseuere in their course euen vnto death. Therefore we are not to get our passport and to bid the Lord farewell, although we haue continued to fight in the battell neuer so long. For Christ wil allow of no souldiers which loue their ease, or will put themselves by and by out of pay ; vnlesse they sticke manfully to it, till they haue euen vanquished death it selfe.

*The double
fight of the
faithfull.*

Chap. 10. 34.

*Christ allowes
of no souldiers
in his battels
that loue their
ease.*

And haue ye forgotten the consolation? &c.] I reade this by an Interrogation. For he asketh if they haue forgotten : signifying thereby that it is not time for them yet to forget. Now he here entreth to speake of this point of doctrine, to wit, that it is profitable for vs to bee exercised vnder the crosse. Now to shew it the better, he vseth the testimonie of *Salomon*, which containes in it two members. The first is, that we must not despise the chastening of the Lord. In the

Verf. 5.

- 2 second hee yeelds a reason; because the Lord corrects him whom hee loueth. Now in as much as *Salomon* begins his speech thus, *My sonne*, the Apostle admonisheth vs by this so sweete and gracious a name of sonne, that wee ought in such wise to bee drawne and allured, that this exhortation should euen enter into the depth of our hearts. Moreover, thus stands *Salomons* argument: If the scourges of God doe beare witnes of the loue he beares vs, were it not an vngracious part in vs to be vexed and grieved thereat, or to hate them? For we must needs say that those are more than vnthankfull, that will not let the Lord alone when hee chastiseth them for their good; but much more if they reiect and cast off this signe of his fatherly kindnes towards them.

*Verf. 6.
Obiection.*

Answer.

*God hath no
other end in
afflicting the
elect, but there-
by to prouide
for their salua-
tion.*

For the Lord correcteth him whom he loueth.] This reason seemes not to be very firme. For God doth indifferently punish the reprobates as well as the elect: and his rodde doe oftner declare his wrath than his loue. For the holy Scripture on the one side so speakes: and experience on the other side confirms it. But when the word of God is directed to the faithfull, then wee must not wonder if it onely speake of this vse, and fruite of chastisements which they feele. For howsoeuer God shews himselfe to be a seuerer & angrie Iudge against the reprobates as oft as hee punisheth them; yet he respects none other end in correcting his chosen, but thereby to prouide for their saluation: which vndoubtedly is a signe of his fatherly good will. Moreover, because the reprobates know not that they are gouerned by the hand of God, they therefore thinke most an end that they are afflicted by chance. As if a rebellious childe, forsaking his fathers house, should get himselfe a great way off, and there become a vagabond, and should there feele the smart of hunger and colde, or other pouerties: this indeede were a worthie punishment which hee well deserued for his follie, that so he might learne to his costs what it is to disobey a good father: and yet notwithstanding he would not for all this acknowledge that this were a fatherly correction. So the vnbeleeuers, although they are, as you would say,

say, giuen ouer, and banished from God, & from his house, yet they perceiue not that it is the hand of God that toucheth them. Let vs remember then that we cannot otherwise feele the loue of God towards vs in the midst of his rods and chastisements, vnlesse wee be well perswaded, that they are so many fatherly corrections and scourges, by which God chastiseth vs for our sinnes. But there can nothing of all this come into the mindes of the reprobates, because they are of fugitiue spirits: that is to say, they care for nothing, but that they may haue alwaies their swindge, and might neuer be drawne into Gods presence, to appeare before him: adde yet hereunto that iudgement must begin at the house of God, 1. Pet. 4. 17. Wherefore, howsoeuer God doe indifferently punish as well the strangers as his owne household; yet neuerthelesse, he so openeth his armes wide vnto these latter, that in the meane while he sheweth by euident tokens that he hath a particular care ouer them. But the true solution indeede is this, that whosoever he be that knoweth, and is perswaded that hee is chastised of him, ought by and by to ascend vp into this imagination, Surely this comes to passe because I am loued of God. For whilest the faithfull doe feele God to bee betweene them and the weight of the euils which they endure in the punishments and chastisements which he inflicteth vpon them here, they haue therein a certaine pledge and seale of his loue. For if he loued them not, he would not bee thus carefull for their saluation.

The reason why they had receiued benefit by afflictions.

Afflictions cannot hurt vs, because God stands betweene vs and them.

And therefore the Apostle concludes, that God offereth himselfe as a father to all those that endure correction. For they that kick and wince, as restie iades are wont to doe; or that take the bridle betweene their teeth, and obstinately resist; are not of this number. Wherefore this is y in a word which he teacheth, that corrections doe then prooue tokens of Gods fatherly loue towards vs, when wee in all obedience doe meekly submit our selues vnto them.

How we may know when afflictions are tokens of Gods loue towards

For what child is it whom the father chastiseth not? He takes vs.
an argument, whereby hee concludes from the custome of

Verf. 7.

*Obiection.**Answer.**The rodde had
need to be al-
waies tyed to
our backes.**He that flies
the crosse, re-
nounceth his
childe's part, a-
mongest Gods
chil dren.**Question.**Answer.*

mens actions, that there is no reason why the children of God should be freed from bearing of the crosse. For if so be we finde not a man (prouided that he be a wise man, and of sound and perfect iudgement) who chastiseth not his children, because without correction there is seldome or neuer any good fruit obtained of them: how much lesse should God, who is onely good, and the most wise father omit so necessarie a remedie? If any obiect, that such kind of corrections doe cease amongst men as soone as the children haue passed the time of their youth: I answer, that as long as wee liue in this world, wee are no more than children in Gods sight, this is the cause then why wee alwaies neede that the rodde should be tyed to our backes. And therefore the Apostle doth rightly inferre, that whosoever desireth to bee exempted from the crosse, such a one renounceth therewithall his child's part among the children of God, and as much as in him lieth, curtes himselfe cleane away from their societie. Whence it followeth, that for the present we esteeme not the benefit of Adoption as we ought, but doe reiect the whole fauour of God, when we withdraw our selues from vnder his rodde. Which all those doe that indure not afflictions patiently.

But why calleth he those that refuse to beare corrections, rather by the name of *bastards*, than strangers? because hee directs his speech to those that had place in the Church, and therefore were called the children of God. His meaning is therefore to signifie that the profession which they make of Christ, shall be but false and counterfeite, if so bee they free themselues from the discipline and correction of their father; for they shall thereby prooue themselues bastards, rather than lawfull children.

9 *Moreover we haue had the fathers of our bodies which corrected vs, and we gaue them reuerence: should we not much rather be in subiection to the father of spirits, that wee might liue?*

10 *For they verely for a fewe daies chastened vs after their*
owne

of pleasure: but he chasteneth vs for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holinesse.

II. Now no chastisement for the present seemeth to be ioyous, but grievous: but after ward, it bringeth the quiet fruite of righteousness, vnto them which are thereby exercised.

Moreover: This comparison hath many parts. The first is, Verf. 9.
 that if we haue giuen so great reuerence to the fathers of 1
 our bodies; that we haue endured correction at their hands:
 much more honour is due then vnto God, who is our spiri-
 tuall father. The second is, the corrections which the Fa- 2.
 thers vse towards their children, is onely profitable for this
 life present: but God hath a further respect; to wit, that he
 might thereby sanctifie vs to eternall life. The third is, mor- 3
 tall men doe chastise their children after their owne plea-
 sure: but God tempers his chastisement with such an excel-
 lent mediocritie, & with such an admirable diuine wisdom;
 that there is nothing in them which is not well qualified.
 In the first place then he puts this diuersitie betweene God
 and men: to wit, that they are fathers of the flesh; and hee of
 the spirits. Which he amplifies by comparing the flesh with
 the spirit. But it may be demanded, whether God be not al- Question.
 so the father of our flesh? for the historie of *Iob* doth not
 without cause place the creation of man amongst the prin-
 cipall miracles of God: wherefore euen in this regard also
 this title of Father is iustly attributed vnto him. And if wee
 say that he is called the Father of *Spirits*, because hee onely
 createth and regenerateth the soules of men without mans
 helpe: some may reply against it, and say, that *S. Paul* boa-
 steth not in vaine, that he was the Spirituall father of those
 whom he had begotten to Christ by the Gospel, 1. Cor. 4.
 15. But to this I answer, that God is the Father as well of the Answer.
 soule as of the bodie, neither is there any other but hee to
 speake properly: this title beeing giuen vnto men by way of
 yeelding or granting vnto them that, which God is content God is the fa-
ther as well of
the soule as of
the bodie.
 to bestow vpon them, whether you speake of the soule or
 bodie. Notwithstanding, because he serues not himselfe in

the creation of soules of any helpe of man; and on the other side, doth miraculously reforme and renue them by the secret vertue of his spirit: for this cause he is specially called the *father of Spirits*.

When he saith, *and we gaue them reuerence*, hee toucheth the affection which is naturally imprinted in vs: to wit, that we giue our fathers reuerence euen then when they deale roughly and seuerely with vs.

When he saith, *Shall we not much more be in subiection to the Father of Spirits?* he signifies, it is good reason that wee should suffer God to inioy that rule and power of government which he ought to exercise ouer vs, as also that right of a father, to which we ought to subiect our selues. When he saith, *that we might liue*, he toucheth the cause or the end. Now wee are admonished by this clause, that there is nothing more pernicious or hurtfull vnto vs, than when we refuse to be gouerned vnder the obedience of God.

Nothing more
hurtfull, than
disobedience
to God.

Vers. 10.

For they verily for a few daies, &c.] This is the second amplification, as I haue said: to wit, that chastisements are appointed and ordained to tame and mortifie the flesh, that we might be renued according to the image of the heavenly life. Whence it appeares, that the fruit of them are perpetuall; and that we are not to looke so much for the same at the hands of men; because their discipline and correction is but a part of the politicall order, which properly belongeth to this life present. Now from hence it followes, that the chastisement or corrections of God doe bring much more profit and benefit with them: to wit, euen so much more as the spirituall holinesse of God is more excellent than bodily commodities. If it be obiected, that it is the dutie of fathers to instruct their children in the worshippe and feare of God; and therefore it may seeme their corrections ought not to be restrained to so little a while: I answer, this is very true: but the Apostle speakes here of that household government which we are accustomed to call outward policie. For although it belongs to the Magistrates office to maintaine religion, yet notwithstanding we may say that their
office.

office is contained within the limits of this life present: because otherwise the ciuill and earthly gouernment, could not bee distinguished from the spirituall kingdome of Christ.

Moreouer, whereas hee saith, that Gods corrections are profitable to *obtaine sanctification*: this ought not so to bee taken, as if they sanctified vs properly; but that they are as helpes and meanes to prepare vs, because the Lord thereby exerciseth vs for the taming and subduing of our flesh.

Now no chastisement for the present, &c. He addes this, to Verf. 11.
the ende we should not measure the chastisements of God, by our present feeling. For he sheweth that we are like vnto children which hate and flie the rodde as much as in them is, because they are not of discretion to iudge howe profitable it is for them. This admonition then is to shew, that chastisements shall not be esteemed of vs as they ought, if wee iudge of them by the present feeling of the flesh: and that we are therefore to bend our sight to the end thereof: for thereby shall wee apprehend this gracious and desireable fruite of righteousness. He calles this fruite *quiet*, because we tremble whilst aduersitie is vpon vs; and are in vnquietnes. For we are tempted with impatience, which is alwaies full of clamorous and foolish rumblings: but after the storme is ouer, we discerne by the spirit of discretion what profit and commoditie that hath brought vs, which before seemed bitter and tedious vnto vs.

12 Wherefore lift vp your hands which hang downe, and your weake knees,

13 And make straight steppes vnto your feete, least that which is halting, be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed.

14 Follow peace with all men; and holines, without which no man shall see the Lord. Rom. 12. 18.

15 Take heed, that no man fall away from the grace of God: let no roote of bitterness spring vp and trouble you, least thereby many be defiled.

Gen. 25. 33.

16 Let there be no fornicator, or prophane person, as Esau, which for one portion of meate sold his birthright.

Gen. 27. 38.

17 For ye know how that afterward also when he would haue inherited the blessing, he was "reiected: for he found no place to repentance, though he sought that blessing with teares.

Verf. 12.

God cares for
vs euen whilst
he afflicts vs.

W Herefore lift up, &c.] Having shewed that God procures our welfare and saluation when he chastiseth vs, he now exhorts vs thereby to cheerefulnesse, and to a franke and free courage. For nothing weakens vs so much, nay nothing causeth vs to bee sooner vtterly out of heart, than when beeing once possessed with a false imagination, we cease to haue any taste or feeling of Gods grace in the time of aduersitie. On the contrarie, there is nothing that can better put life and mettle into vs, than this signe: to wit, that God stands by and helps vs; yea is carefull of vs, euen whilst he afflicteth vs. Furthermore, he not onely exhorts vs by these words to beare afflictions constantly, but also aduertiseth vs, that we haue no cause at all to be drowsie or slouthfull to doe our dutie. For we haue sufficient experience what hindrance the feare of the crosse brings vnto vs, and how much it disturbes vs from seruing of God as we ought.

Many would
seeme to be
friends to the
truth: but fewe
are resolu'd to
suffer for the
maintenance
of it.

Many would willingly make profession of their faith: but because they are afraid of persecution, they haue neither feete nor hands to follow, nor to put this holy affection of their heart in execution. Many there are also that could bee content to fight for the glorie of God, which would enterprise the maintenance of good and iust causes: nay they would bestow their labour both in publike, and in priuate, for the honour of God, and the saluation of their brethren: but because they see they should endanger themselues, and get the hatred of the wicked: because they also see that many incombrances doe waite to meete them: therefore they fall to be sluggish, with the hands acrosse, as they say. Thus then, if this too excessiue feare of the crosse can be once corrected in vs, and that wee can be enured to patience: there

there shall be no part of vs which will not be fit and disposed to yeeld his duty to God. This is that which the Apostle meanes then: Why haue you feeble hands (saith he) and why are your knees so disioynted? Truly because you know not what sound consolation is in aduersitie: which also is the cause why you are so carelesse to performe your duties. But hauing now shewed how profitable this discipline of the crosse is for you, this doctrine ought to put new strength into al your members, so as you should now be readie both with feete and with hands to follow the calling of God.

Where the feare of the crosse is once corrected: there men are fitted to all good duties.

Now it seemes that hee alludes to a place which is in the prophecie of Isai. chap. 35. 3. for there the Prophet commands the faithfull Teachers, that they should comfort the weake hands, and strengthen the feeble knees, by setting the hope of grace before them. And here the Apostle would haue all the faithfull to doe the like in their places. For if this be the fruite of the consolations which God sets before vs: then as it is the office of the Pastor in his place to repaire and strengthen the whole congregation; so should euery one in his place seeke to raise vp himselfe in taking courage vnto him, and in applying this doctrine in particular to his owne person.

And make streight steps, &c. Hitherunto he hath shewed that wee ought to stay our selues vpon the consolations of God: to the end we may be strong and couragious to do well: and also that this is our vpholding. Now hee addes another thing: to wit, that wee walke wisely, keeping the right way. For an vndiscreete zeale is no lesse euill, than slothfulnes and weaknes. Although this vprightnes in the way which hee recommends vnto vs procedes hence, to wit, when the spirit of a man hauing ouercome all feare, regards onely that which God alloweth. For feare is but too ingenious to seeke starting holes. So then as when wee are inwrapped with a peruerse feare, wee seeke crooked by-waies; so also whosoever shall be prepared on the contrary to endure aduersities, will take the right course whereunto the Lord calles him, and wil neither turne to the right hand,

Verse. 13.

An vndiscreet zeale is no lesse hurtfull, than a fainting slothfulnes.

Feare is too ingenious in seeking starting holes.

NOR

nor to the left. In summe, he giues vs this rule of well doing, to wit, that we order our *steps* according to the will of God: to the end that neither feare, nor the intisements of this world; no nor any impediment whatsoeuer doe turne vs out of the right way.

And therefore he addes, *least that which is halting be turned out of the way*, that is to say, least by halting you bee cast behinde farre from the way. Now hee calles it an *halting*, when mens mindes doe varie: being now of that opinion, and then of that. As also when they doe not wholly and vnfainedly submit themselues to God. So speakes *Elias* to those double hearted ones, who mingled the seruice of God with their superstitions; How long (saith he) will you halt betweene two opinions? 1. King. 18. 21. Now this is a very fit manner of speaking and wants not his grace: for it is farre worse to *erre* than to *halt*. Those which begin to halt doe not turne out of the way at the first chop, but they re-coyle backe by little and little more and more, till being carried away into error, they finde themselues fast snared in the middest of Satans labyrinth. The Apostle admonisneth vs then that wee labour to take heede of halting betimes, because if wee once fall to dissemble, and bethinke vs not of a remedie, wee shall at the last with the time turne farre off from God. We may also turne it in this manner, Least halting corrupt, or estrange it selfe: but the sense will remaine alwaies one. For the Apostle signifies that those which keep not the right way, but suffer themselues by carelesnes to erre hither or thither any way whatsoeuer; doe in proceesse of time, as much as in them is, wholly estrange themselues from God.

We must take heed of halting in Gods matters betimes.

Verf. 14.

If we take not exceeding paines in pursuing of peace, we shall neuer keepe it.

Let vs follow peace, &c.] The nature of man is so corrupted, that it seemes every man fleeth peace. For every one is giuen to himself: every one would be soothed in his course, and none vouchsafes to applie himselfe to the weaknes of another. Wherefore vnlesse we take exceeding great paines to follow peace, we shall neuer keepe it. For there is no day but many things fall out, which will giue vs sufficient occasion

sion of dissentions and braules. Therefore it is that the Apostle commandeth vs to *follow peace*: as if hee should say, Ye thinke it sufficient onely to keepe and to loue it for the commoditie it brings you: but you ought to enforce your selues to keepe it in perfection amongst your selues with all your might. Which yet is vnpossible, vnlesse we forget many iniuries, and pardon one another in many things.

Notwithstanding, because a godly man cannot obtaine peace with the wicked vpon any condition, but in flattering them in their bad courses: therefore the Apostle addes immediately after, that we must ioyne peace with *holinesse*: as if he recommended peace vnto vs vnder this exception, That we take heede the friendship of the wicked doe not pollute nor defile vs. For this word *holinesse*, is properly referred to God. Wherefore though the whole world should be on a flame with warres and contentions, yet must not we leaue holinesse, which is the band of our coniunction wee haue with God. To be short, let vs keepe peace with men, yet so as we hurt not our conscience. He saith, that without *holinesse* none can see the Lord: because wee shall neuer behold God with other eyes, than with those which shall be reformed according to his image. *¶ We must strue to keepe peace vwith men: yet so as we lose not holinesse, nor hurt our consciences.*

Take heede that no man fall away; or, looke carefully to it. *Verf. 15.* By these words hee sheweth that it is an easie matter to fall from the grace of God. For it is not without cause that hee requireth vs to bee watchfull in this behalfe: for Satan no sooner seeth vs carelesse, or retchlesse, but he hath forthwith inuironed and surprised vs. To be short, wee had neede take courage to vs, and to be watchfull, if we meane to perseuere in the grace of God. Now by this word *grace*, he comprehends our whole vocation. But if any will from hence inferre that the grace of God hath no efficacie, vnlesse wee worke with him by our owne proper mouing; it shall bee but a friuolous argument. Wee know very well how great the sluggishnes of our flesh is: hath it not great neede then to be continually pricked an end? But when the Lord prouokes and stirres vs vp by admonitions and warnings, hee doth

doth therewithall touch and moue our hearts, least his exhortations should become fruitlesse, or melt away without efficacie. We must not gather then from his commanding and exhorting vs to perseuere, what power, or facultie of free will man hath: for surely euen this diligence and careful watchfulnes, which the Apostle here requirerh, is the gift of God.

Let no roote of bitternesse, &c.] I make no doubt but he alludes to the place of *Moses* which is in Deut. 29. For *Moses* hauing published the law, teacheth how they ought to take heede there were none among them that should cause any gall or wormewood to budde or sprout forth among the people of God. And presently interpreting his owne meaning, saith, If any heare the words of this curse, and shall blesse his soule in his sinne: and as drunkards are wont to prouoke their thirst; so he in like manner shall prouoke his wicked lust, by a flattering, and soothing himself vp. with the hope of impunitie: such a one was to take heede that hee fell not to a contempt and despising of God. The same drift hath the Apostle in this place. For hee forewarnes vs that if we suffer such a roote to grow on more and more, at length it will corrupt and spoyle many. And hee not onely commandes euery one to plucke vp such an infectious plague out of his heart; but also forbids vs to suffer it to grow amongst vs. I grant that it cannot be auoided but some roots will remaine in the Church of God, because there will be alwaies hypocrites, and wicked persons mingled among the good: but as often as they sprout forth, they ought to be cut downe, least being suffred to increase, they come at the last to choake the good seede. He putteth *bitternes* in stead of that which *Moses* saith of *gall and wormewood*: but they both meant to expresse a venomous and deadly roote. Seeing then that this kinde of euil is so pernicious and hurtfull; so much the more diligently ought we to preuent the same, to the end it may not grow nor spread any further.

Let there be no fornicator, &c.] As heretofore he hath exhorted to holinesse, so to the ende he might turne vs from the

the contrarie pollutions, he puts one kinde, to wit, that none be a fornicator. But by and by after he descends also to the generalitie, to wit, that there be no *prophane person*. For this word prophane, is the proper opposite to holinesse. The end for which the Lord hath called vs, is that he might sanctifie vs to his obedience. Now this is then brought to passe whe we renounce the world: but whosoever pleaseth himselfe so in the filthinesses of it, that he often returnes to his vomit, such a one is said to prophane himselfe. Although we may giue this definition in generall of prophane persons, to wit, that all such may goe vnder that title, who esteeme not the grace of God in such wise, that in despising of the world, they aspire to the loue of it. But because men doe prophane themselves diuers waies, so much the more ought wee to stand vpon our guard, that Satan may not finde the least entrance that may be to defile vs with his corruptions. And for as much as there is no religion without sanctification, so much the more ought we to profit in the feare of God, in the mortifying of the flesh, and in all the exercises of pietie. For euen as we are prophane till we be separate from the world, so also if we fall backe againe into the filthinesses of it, we renounce the grace of sanctification.

*No religion
without sancti-
fication.*

As Esau.] This example may be an exposition vnto vs, so farre forth as this word *prophane* reacheth. For *Esau* esteeming a dish of pottage more than his birthright, was deprived of the blessing. So they also are prophane, in whom the loue of the world beares such a sway, that they forget heauen, who being either carried away with pride, or the loue of money and wealth, or overcome with surfettings and drunkennesse, or beeing snared with other delights, they can giue no place for Christ nor his scepter to beare rule in their hearts: for that is the least matter of a thousand with them. Now this example of *Esau* is very fitting to this place. For when the Lord meant to expresse the greatnesse of his loue towards his people, he calles all them his *first borne*, whom he hath called to the hope of eternall life. Behold here indeede an inestimable honour which he doth vs: to which,

*The cause why
the things of
this world are
in such high
account with
vs.*

Ver. 17.

which, if we will compare all the riches, all the commodities, all the honours, and delights of this world, be it whatsoever men are wont to esteeme requisite for a happie and prosperous life: all these things in regard of the other, are scarcely worth a poore messe of broth. Now the reason why we thinke so highly of those things which are in effect as nothing, is because some wicked lust hath dazled our eies: yea rather, hath put them cleane out. Wherefore if so be we meane to haue any place in the sanctuarie of God, let vs learne to contemne and despise such suppings by which Satan is wont to pamper the wicked, and to hold them in his nets.

For ye know how afterward, &c.] At the first he thought it a matter of nothing to sell his birthright, esteeming it but a matter of sport: but in the ende, when it was too late, he felt what hurt he had done himselfe, when hee was deprived of the blessing: and that his father gaue it to *Jacob* his brother. They also who beeing taken in Satans nets in the pleasures of this world, estranging themselues from God, selling their saluatiō, to fil their bellies with earthly things, which are but as the suppings of the kitchen, thinke all this while that they loose nothing: but rather, as if they were then become marueilous happie, please and flatter themselues. At the last god opens their eies by some admonition to see their own wretchednesse, and then they are touched to the quicke with the feeling of their losse, whereof they made no account before. Whilest *Esau* was hungrie, hee cares for nothing, but how he may fill his bellie: when he was full, he mockes: & thinkes his brother a foole, who had willingly parted with his pottage. Even such for all the world is the blockishnesse of the ynfaithfull, whilest they are inflamed with their corrupt desires, or when they plunge themselues aboue measure in their ioyes. Whereas he saith, *he was reproofed*, it is as much as if he had said, he was reiected or repulsed.

For he found no place to repentance, &c.] That is to say, his late repentance did profit him nothing; or, that he got nothing by it; although he sought *that blessing with teares*; which

which through his own default he had lost. Now in as much as he doth here denounce such a danger to hang ouer the heads of all the contemners of Gods grace: it may there-
 vpon be demaunded, a man hauing receiued the grace of God, and afterward contemne it, preferring the world before his kingdome; whether there be no more hope of pardon for such a one? I answer, pardon is not precisely denied
 to such, but they are to be admonished to take heede the like also befall not them. And in very trueth, wee may see many examples every day of Gods seueritie in this behalfe, whereby he takes vengeance vpon the mockeries and scoffs of prophane men. For howsoeuer they promise themselues the next day to amend in; oftentimes he preuerts their hopes in taking them suddainly out of this world by new and v unexpected kinds of death: and whilest they esteeme all that which they heare of Gods iudgements to be but as a fable; he pursues them so as they are constrained to feele him their iudge: and whilest they would faine lulle their consciences asleepe; they are suddenly abashed by feeling horrible torments: and is it not a iust punishment of their blockishnes? Now howsoeuer this happēs not to all, yet not withstanding because there is danger that it may befall some; therefore the Apostle for good cause admonisheth all in generall to beware. Others aske another question here, to wit, if any sinner that repents bee profited nothing at all thereby. For it seemes he meant to say so, when he teacheth that repentance did *Esaū* no good. I answer, that *repentance* is not here taken for a true and sound conuersion vnto God, but onely for that feare wherewith God wounds the wicked after they haue along time sported themselues in their malice. Now we are not to maruell if it be said that this feare is vnprofitable; because they come not to amendment of life by it, neither doe they come to the hatred of their sinnes, but are onely tormented with the punishments they indure. And as much may be said of his *teares*. As oft as the sinner groaneth, the Lord is ready to pardon; and a man shall neuer seeke mercie at Gods hands in vaine, because the

doore shall be opened to him that knockes, Matth. 7. 8. But because the teares of *Esau* were the teares of a desperate man, they were not directed to God. So then, howsoever the wicked bewaile their condition, complaine, and lament; yet they knocke not at Gods gate. For this cannot be done without faith. But on the contrarie, so much the more their consciences doe sharply gall them, so much the more doe they murmur against God, and fret at him. I denie not but they would faine haue accessse giuen them to come vnto God: but because they apprehend nothing but his wrath; therefore they flie his presence. Thus wee see very often that those who with iests and scoffes were accustomed to say it would be soone enough for the to repent at the last gaspe: when they came to it indeed, haue cried out thus amongst the gricuous torments they haue indured, that the time of obtaining grace was past: for (say they) we are ordained to perdition, in that we haue sought God too late. Yea surely sometimes they come so farre as to say, O if! Alas if! but despaire by and by breakes off their desires, and shuttes vp their mouthes, to the end they should goe no further.

*Fearefull e-
uenis of late
repentance.*

Exod. 19. 12.
& 20. 21.

18 For ye are not come vnto the mount that might be touched, nor vnto burning fire, nor to blacknesse, and darkenesse, & tempest.

19 Neither vnto the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words, which they that heard it, excused themselves, that the word should not be spoken to them any more,

Exod. 19. 12.

20 (For they were not able to abide that which was commanded, yea though a beast touch the mountaine, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart:

21 And so terrible was the sight which appeared, that Moses said, I feare and quake.)

22 But ye are come to the mount Zion, and to the citie of the liuing God, the celestiaall Hierusalem, and to the company of innumerable Angels,

23 And to the assembly and congregation of the first borne, which are written in heauen, and to God the iudge of all, and to the

the

the spirits of iust and perfect men,

24 And to Iesus the Mediatour of the new Testament, & to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things, than that of Abel.

For ye are not come, &c.] Now hee disputes with another kinde of argument, For he commendeth the greatnesse of that grace which is manifested vnto vs by the Gospel, to the end we might learne to receiue it with all reuerence. Secondly, he sets before vs, and extolles the sweetnesse of it; to drawe vs to the loue and imbracing of it. And he giueth waight to both these, by making comparison betweene the lawe and the Gospel. For by how much the more the kingdom of Christ excels the administration of *Moses*: and our vocation, is more noble, than the vocation of the auncient people; so much the more vile shall our ingratitude be: yea lesse excusable if we receiue not with such reuerence as is meete, so great a benefit offered vs; as also, if we adore not with all humilitie so high a maiestie of Christ, which sheweth it selfe apparantly to vs in this behalfe. Moreouer seeing God manifests not himselfe vnto vs now in any fearefull manner, as he did in times past vnto the Iewes, but summons and calles vs vnto himselfe, after such a louing and gracious manner: we by this meanes double and trebble our vnthankfulnesse, if we come not voluntarily vnto him, with all earnestnesse of affection to receiue this his summons which he offereth vnto vs. Let vs remember in the first place then, that here is a comparison betweene the law and the Gospel: next, that this comparison hath two parts: to wit, the glorie of God manifests it selfe more clearely in the Gospel, than in the law: and that the calling of the Gospel is more amiable and gentle at this day: whereas in times past it was altogether with feares and astonishment.

To a mountaine that may be touched.] They expound this place diuersly. For mine owne part, I thinke there is here an opposition betweene the earthly mountaine, and the spirituall. And thereunto tends that which followes after, touch-

Verse. 18.

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2

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2

1

2

ing the *burning fire; the whirlewinde, and of the tempest*, with such other things. For these miracles and signes which God shewed to giue authority to his law, & to cause it to be receiued with reuerence; if we consider the in theselues they are indeed magnificent & heauenly: but when we come to the kingdome of Christ, the things which God sets before vs therein surpasseth all heauens. And thus it comes to passe, that all the dignitie of the law beginnes to waxe in a manner earthly. For in this manner Mount Sinai might be touched with hands: but the mountaine of Sion cannot bee apprehended but by the spirit. All those things which are recited in the 19. of Exodus, were visible figures: but those which we haue in the kingdome of Christ, are hidden from the sense of the flesh. If any shall object, that the signification of all these things was spirituall, and that there are yet at this day externall exercises of godlinesse, by which we are raised vp to heauen: I answer, that the Apostle speakes by comparison from the lesse to the greater. Now when wee come once to conferre the law with the Gospel, no man doubts but that which is spirituall in the Gospel carrieth his waight in this behalfe: and contrariwise, that the earthly signes in the law, were more apparant, and surmounted the rest in number.

Obiection.

Answer.

Verse. 19.

So that they which heard it, &c.] This is the second member, wherein he shewes that the law was farre vnlike the gospel, because when that came to be published, all was full of feare and diuers astonishments. For whatsoever we read of these things in the 19. of Exodus, tended to cause the people to know that God ascended vp into his iudgement seate, to shew himselfe a seuerer iudge. If it happened that an innocent *beast* did approach too neere, hee commanded it should be *thrust through with a dart*: how much greater punishment then was prepared for sinners, who felt themselves guiltie, yea and knew that the law made their inditement, and gaue sentence of eternall death against them? But the gospel containes nothing but sweetnes and amiable things, provided that we receiue it by faith. And if any desire further

Verse. 20.

ther satisfaction in this matter, let him haue recourse to the Comment vpon the third chapter of the 2. Cor.

Now in that he saith, *the people required it might be spoken no more vnto the*: it ought not so to be taken as if the people had been vnwilling to heare the words of God: but they instantly intreated that they might not bee constrained to heare God speake any more in his own person. For the person of *Moses* comming betweene did somewhat asswage the astonishment. Notwithstanding there is yet a point which troubleth the expositors: that is, that the Apostle attributes these words to *Moses*, *I feare and quake*, which Verf. 21. words we reade not that *Moses* spake. But it will be no hard matter to giue a solution to this, if we consider that *Moses* spake this in the name of the people, as if he had been their interpreter to God. It was a common complaint then of all the people; but *Moses* is brought in speaking of it; who was, as you would say, the common mouth of them all.

But ye are come to the mount Sion, &c.] He alludes to the Verf. 22. prophecies, by which God promised in times past that the Gospell should come forth of Sion: *Isai. 2.* and such other places. Hee compares mount Sion then, with mount Sinai: and afterward, the *heauenly Hierusalem* (which hee calles heauenly of purpose) to the end the Iewes should not rest in that earthly Ierusalem which flourished, and was in great estimation vnder the Law. For in as much as they were bent with an obstinate affection to remaine still vnder the yoke and bondage of the Law; they made it of *mount Sion*, to become *mount Sinai*, as *S. Paul* saith, *Gal. 4.* By the *heauenly Ierusalem* then he meanes that which should be built throughout the world: as in the Prophet *Zachariab*, the Angell stretcheth the line of it from East to West.

And to the companie of innumerable Angels.] His meaning Verf. 23. is, that wee are made fellowes with the Angels: reckoned with the Patriarkes: and gathered into heauen among all the blessed Spirits; when Christ calles vs to himselfe by the Gospell. Now it is an inestimable honour which the heauenly Father doth vs; in making vs companions with the

Angels, and the holy Fathers. That which he saith here, of *innumerable Angels*, he tooke it out of *Daniel*.

By this word *first borne*, he comprehends not all the children of God, as the Scripture is sometimes wont to doe; but he names the Patriarkes, and the other chiefe Fathers of the Church thus particularly by way of honour. He saith, *they are written in heauen*, because it is said that God hath all the elect written in his booke, or in his register, or secret roll, as *Ezechiel* speakes, chap. 13. 9. *To God who is iudge of all*. It seemes hee said this to astonish men: as if hee should say, Grace is in such wise offered vs, as yet notwithstanding we ought to thinke that wee haue to doe with *our Iudge*, to whom we shal giue accounts, if we thrust in our selues rashly and vnreuerently into his Sanctuarie, being polluted and prophane.

He addes, *and to the spirits of the iust*, to shew that wee are entertained into fellowship with the holy *spirits*, which hauing put off the tabernacles of their bodies, haue therewithall forsaken all the filthinesse of this world. And for this cause hee calles them *sanctified*, or perfect, because they are no more subiect to the infirmities of the flesh; as also because they haue put off the flesh. And hereof we may assuredly collect, that after the blessed soules are once separated from their bodies, they cease not for all that to liue still before God. For otherwise wee cannot keepe them company.

*The soules of
the faithfull
liue with God,
after they be
separated from
their bodies.*

Lastly hee addes, *And to Iesu the Mediatour*: because there is none but he onely by whom the Father is made at peace with vs. Neither can any other make his face to shine amiably and graciously vpon vs; to the end we might feare no more to goe into his presence, but Christ onely. Yet hee shewes herewithall how Christ performes this his office of a Mediatour: to wit, by his *blood*, which hee calles the *blood of sprinkling*, following therein the phrase of the Hebrues, taking it for him who doth sprinkle: because that euen as it was once shed for the purgation of sinnes; so is it now also needfull that our soules bee sprinkled therewith by faith.

faith. In the meane while notwithstanding, the Apostle in this phrased of speech alludes to the ancient custome of the Law, of which mention was made heretofore.

Proffering better things than that of Abel.] We may also, Vers. 14.
 resolute it; Speaking better: as if he should say; the blood of Christ's blood
 Christ cries with greater efficacy, and is better heard of God cries with greater force and
 than that of *Abel*. I had rather neuertheless take it with efficacie than
 out figure, and as the words doe plainly signifie. Thus then that of Abels.
 it is said, that this blood proffers better things; because it
 carrieth this effect still with it, to obtaine remission of sins,
 and offences. For to speake properly, the blood of *Abel*
 cries not; but the cursed murder which *Cain* committed
 vpon the person of his brother, requires vengeance before
 God: but the blood of Christ cries, because the purgation The crye of
 and sanctification made by it, is alway heard and granted. Christ's blood
alwaies heard.

25 See that ye despise not him that speaketh: for if they escaped not which refused him, which spake on earth: much more shall we not escape, if we turne away from him, that speaketh from heauen.

26 Whose voyce then shooke the earth, and now hath declared, saying, Yet once more will I shake, not the earth only but also heauen. Haggai. 2. 7.

27 And this word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things which are shaken, as of things which are made with hands, that the things which are not shaken may remaine.

28 Wherefore seeing we receiue a kingdome, which cannot be shaken, let vs haue grace whereby we may so serue God, that we may please him with reuerence and feare.

29 For euen our God is a consuming fire. Deut. 4. 24.

SEE that ye despise not, &c. He vseth the same word which Vers. 15.
 she did before, when hee said, the people refused to haue
 God speake vnto them in his owne person. Yet neuertheless, in mine opinion, he meanes another thing: to wit, that
 we reiect not the word which is allotted vnto vs. And yet

further he here shewes what he meant in the former comparison: to wit, that the containners of the Gospell shall be sharply punished, seeing the ancient people went not unpunished which despised the law: as also he followes his other argument which he took from the lesse to the greater, when he saith that God; or *Moses* spake then on earth: and that now the same God; or Christ speakes now from heauen. Although I had rather referre both the one and the other to God. Now he saith that *God spake on earth*, because he spake more low and after a manner lesse authentically. Let vs alwaies remember that the outward administration of the Law is here handled: the which, if wee compare with the Gospell, shall be found such as smelleth something of the earth; because it doth not raise vp the minds of men aboue the heauens, vnto a perfect wisdom. For howsoever the law contains the same doctrine, yet for as much as it was a schoolmaster onely; perfection is alwaies taken from it.

Verf. 26.

Whose voyce then shooke the earth, &c.] Seeing God did then shake the earth when he published the Law, he proues that God speakes now much more diuinely, and gloriously: because the earth is not onely shaken, but the heauen also. For his prooffe he alleageth the place of *Haggai*, the which notwithstanding he recites not word for word: but because the Prophet foretels that heauen and earth shall be shaken, the Apostle takes these words vp, to shew that the voyce of the Gospell not onely thundreth in earth, but it also pearceth aboue the heauens. No doubt but *Agge* there speaks of the kingdome of Christ. For it by and by followes in the text, I will moue all nations, and the desire of all people shall come; and I will fill this house with my glorie. Now it is out of question that all people were not gathered into the same bodie, till they were gathered vnder the leading of Christ: neither is there any other desire wherewith wee can rest satisfied, but in the same Iesus Christ. Againe, *Salomons* Temple did not surmount in glorie, till the greatnes thereof was spread throughout the whole world. Wee neede not doubt therefore but that the Prophet points out the time of Christ.

Christ. So then if from the beginning of Christ his kingdom it was necessarie that not onely the lower parts of the earth should be shaken, but that his power should come euen to heauen it selfe: truly the Apostle rightly gathers that the doctrine of the Gospell is more excellent, and ought to bee heard with the greater euidence of all creatures.

And this word, yet once more, &c.] In the text of the Prophet it is word for word; Yet a little while. Now his meaning is, that the calamitie of the people shall not endure long, before the Lord wil send deliuerance. But the Apostle stands not vpon the phrase; only he inferres by the mouing of the heauens, and the earth, that the whole state of the world should be changed at Christ his comming. For whatsoever is created is subiect to change; but the kingdome of Christ is eternall: wherefore it necessarily followes thereupon that al creatures ought to be reformed and made better. From thence he comes to make an exhortation; to wit, that we apprehend this kingdom which cannot be shaken: for the reason why the Lord *remoues vs*, is to the end he might confirme vs truly and for euer in himselfe. Notwithstanding I approoue rather of the reading of the old Latin translator, which is thus; *Taking the kingdome, we haue grace.* If wee reade it by an affirmation, the sense will runne very well: to wit, that when we receiue the Gospell, the spirit of Christ is giuen vs, to the end wee may serue God with reuerence and feare.

If we reade it by way of exhortation, to wit, *Let vs haue*, it will bee a more obscure and constrained manner of speech. In a word, I take it the Apostle meant to say, that if so be we enter into y^e kingdom of Christ by faith, we shall obtaine assured grace, which will cause vs to serue God with fruite: for euen as the kingdome of Christ is farre higher than the world, so also is the gift of regeneration. When he saith, *By which we may serue God, so as wee may please him, with reuerence and feare*, although he requires a readines and delight in the obedience which wee giue him; yet he therewithall signifies, that God approoues of no seruice which is

not

God approoves
of no seruice,
but that which
is ioyned with
humilitie.

Verf. 29.

Exod. 20. 5.

not ioyned with humilitie, and modestie. By this meanes he condemneth both the confidence of the flesh, as also the sluggishnesse which is ordinarily ingendred by it.

For euen our God is a consuming fire.] As not long since he did sweetely set before vs the grace of God, so now also he sets before vs his seueritie: and it seemes he borrowed this sentence out of the 4. of Deut. Thus wee see that God leaues no way vnattempted to draw vs vnto himselfe, for in alluring vs gently, he thereby trieth whether we will follow him willingly: but if so be he perceiue that he profits himselfe but little in drawing vs by faire meanes, he proceedes then to threatnings and thundrings. And to say the truth, it is no way expedient that grace should be promised vs at any hand by God, but that there ought to be threatnings mingled therewithall. For (in as much as we are too forward to flatter our selues) vnlesse wee bee pricked an ende with the spurre: a doctrine more pleasing and gentle, would bee but coldly receiued, and would not much moue vs. Therefore as the Lord is fauourable and mercifull to a thousand generations of them that feare him, so also is he iealous, and iustly takes vengeance vpon the third, and vpon the fourth generation, when he is despised.

CHAP. XIII.

Rom. 12. 10.

1. Pet. 4. 9.

Gen. 18. 3.

& 19. 3.

1 Let brotherly loue continue:

2 Be not forgetfull to entertaine strangers: for thereby some haue receiued Angels into their houses vnawares.

3 Remember them that are in bonds, as though yee were bound with them: and them that are in affliction, as if yee were also afflicted in the bodie.

4 Mariage is honourable among all, and the bedde undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will indge.

5 Let your conuersation bee without conetousnesse, and bee content "with those things that ye haue: for he hath said, I will not leaue thee, neither for sake thee.

"or, with present things.
Iosh. 1. 5.

6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is mine helper, neither will I feare what man can doe vnto me. *Psal. 118. 6.*

Et brotherly loue continue.] It was requisite that hee *Verf. 6.*
 should now recommend brotherly loue vnto them;
 because the secret hatred which might fall out by
 reason of the pride of the Iewes, might cause diuisions in the Churches. Yet so, that this exhortation is greatly necessarie *Nothing is*
 also generally. For nothing is more easily lost than loue *sooner lost than*
 regard that euery one being too much addicted to the loue *loue.*
 of himselfe, is soone drawne to make the lesse account of an
 other. And besides, there happen many offences euery day,
 whereby we are separate one from another. He calles it *bro-*
 therly loue, not onely to shewe that we ought to be knit to-
 gether with the band of a singular loue and amitie; but also
 to the end we might remember, that we can not otherwise
 be Christians, vnlesse we be brethren. For he speakes of that
 loue which the household of faith ought to haue among
 themselves; in regard the Lord hath more neerely ioyned
 them together by the common bond of Adoption. And *The custome of*
 therefore it was a profitable custome in the primitive church, *calling one an-*
 that Christians called one another brethren: but the name *other by the*
 is now almost abolished, with the thing it selfe. Vnlesse the *name of bre-*
 Monkes haue taken vp the vse of that to them, which others *thren, a com-*
 haue forsaken: who yet by their discords & diuisions which *mendable*
 they haue among themselves, doe sufficiently declare in the *thing.*
 meane while, that the diuell is their father; and that they are
 borne of him.

Forget not to lodge strangers.] This dutie of humanitie al *Verf. 2.*
 so is almost abolished from among men, because the aun- *The auncient*
 cient hospitalitie which is commended in the histories, is to *hospitalitie, is*
 vs as a strange and vnknowne matter: for in stead of houses *growne out of*
 of hospitalitie are come Tauerne and Innes. Now he speakes *vse.*
 not onely of the good vse of hospitalitie which was then v-
 sed amongst the rich, but he rather commands them to take
 in the poble and afflicted into their houses, in regard there
 were many then which were banished from the places of
 their

their owne abode, for the name of Christ. And that he might the better prouoke those to whom he writes to the performance of this dutie, he addes, *that some haue receiued Angels into their houses vnawares*, thinking they had beene but men. I doubt not but this is to be vnderstood of *Abraham*, and *Lot*. For they beeing accustomed to entertaine strangers, sometimes lodged Angels vnawares, when yet they thought of no such matter: & thus their houses were greatly honoured. And questionlesse the Lord also shewed euident signes how acceptable hospitalitie is vnto him, when he so largely recompenced both *Abraham* and *Lot*. If any object that this fell not out often, the answer is easie: Angels are not onely receiued, but euen Christ himselfe is entertained of vs, when we receiue the poore home to our houses in his name. There is an allusion, and an artificiall manner of speech in the Greeke words, which haue an excellent grace, which cannot be expressed in the French.

Obiection.

Answer.

When we inuite the poore to our houses: in them we giue entertainment to Christ.

Verf. 3.

Remember those that are in bonds, &c.] There is nothing which mooueth vs more to mercie and compassion, than when we put vpon our selues the person of those that are afflicted. And therefore he saith, that we ought to bee mindfull of the prisoners, euen as if we were in their place. That which immediately followeth in the other member is diuersly expounded, to wit, *as you your selues also*, beeing of the bodie. Some take it generally, thus; you also are subiect to the same aduersities and inconueniences, which are incident to all mankind. And others restraine it thus; as if you were in their person. I like neither the one nor the other. For I referre it to the whole bodie of the Church: and so, the sense will bee, seeing you are members of the same bodie, you ought to bee mooued with the afflictions of one and other, to the end there may be no separation betweene you.

Verf. 4.

Marriage is honourable, &c.] Some thinke this to be an exhortation to those that are married, to the end they might liue chasty, and in such honestie in marriage as thereunto appertaineth: also, that the husband should dwell with his wife in all chastitie, and modestie, that their bedde bee not

pro-

prophaned by lasciuious dishonestie. And so this word, *let it be*, should be supplied. Notwithstanding, it is not amisse if we should say, Mariage is honourable among al. For when we heare that mariage is honourable, ought it not by and by to come into our mindes: Surely, we ought to liue in the same honourably, and reuerently? Others take it by way of yeelding or granting, thus: Although mariage be honourable, yet it is not lawfull to commit fornication. But euery one may peceiue that this sense is too cold. For mine owne part, I rather thinke that the Apostle here opposeth mariage to whoredome, as the remedie for the disease: and the course of the text doeth euidently shewe that his meaning is so. For before he threatens whoremongers with the iudgements of God, he first shewes them what the true meane is to auoid this vengeance: that is, if we liue honestly in mariage. Let this then be one member, That *whoredomes* shal not escape vnpunished, *because it is Gods office, to shew his vengeance vpon them.* And seeing he hath beene pleased to blesse the societie of man and wife, which himselfe hath ordained; it followes then that all other societies or fellowshippes, out of marriage, are accursed and condemned of him. Wherefore he not onely threatens adulterers with punishment, but all manner of fornicators also. For all of them doe flinch backe from the holy institution of God: yea they corrupt, and ouerthrow it; abusing themselves indifferently with all companies, whilest there is but one lawfull coniunction onely which is ratified and confirmed in the name and by the authority of God. Now because it is impossible to repress the ouerflowing of whordomes, without the remedie of mariage, for this cause he commendeth it vnto vs, calling it *honourable*.

That which he addes afterward of *the bed undefiled*; I willingly referre it to this, namely, that married persons might know that all things are not permitted vnto them; but that they ought rather to vse the lawfull bedde with all moderation, to the ende they might abstaine from whatsoever was contrarie to the shamesfastesse and honestie of marriage.

*Marriage law-
full for all.*

marriage. When he saith, *among all*, I vnderstand it, that there is no estate to whom marriage is forbidden. For that which God hath permitted to all mankind in generall, is fitting for all without exception: my meaning is, to all those that are fit to marrie, and stand in neede of it. Now it was expedient this matter should be set forth in expresse termes, to the ende some superstition might bee prevented: whereof it may be Satan had then spread some seedes in secret; to wit, that marriage is a prophane thing, or at the least farre off from Christian perfection. For these lying spirits of whom Saint *Paul* prophesied, 1. Tim. 4. 3. came by and by after, forbidding marriage. To the ende therefore that no man should fondly imagine that marriage was onely permitted to the simple laytie, as they call them, and that those of high place in the Church ought to abstaine: the Apostle takes away all exception, and not onely teacheth that it is permitted, and suffered (as Saint *Hierom* is pleased subtilly to cauill) but also affirmes that it is *worthy of honour*. I wonder therefore that those who haue brought in the forbidding of marriage into the world, haue not bin abashed with this so expresse a proclamation: vnlesse it hath come to passe to the end that the bridle might be let loose ynto Satan, to punish the vnthankfulnesse of those who refused to heare the voice of God.

Verf. 5.

Let your conuersation be without couetousnesse.] When hee would redresse *couetousnesse*, he by and by very prudently comands vs, *to content our selues with that we haue for the present*. For the true content of filuer (or at the leastwise the true magnanimitie of minde, in the right and moderate vse thereof) is, when we are content with that which the Lord hath giuen, whether it be little or much. For certainly it seldome happens, that a couetous person is content, how much soeuer he hath: those then that content not themselues with a meane estate, although they should abound with riches, yet they would alwaies couet notwithstanding to haue more. This is the lesson which Saint *Paul* saith he had learned, to wit, he knew how to want, and to abound. Phil. 4. 12. Who-
soeuer

soeuer then hath so tempered his desire, that he is contented with his estate, he hath chased out of his heart the loue of money.

For he hath said, I will not leaue thee, &c.] He here alleadgeth two testimonies. Some thinke the first to be taken out of *Ioshua: chap. 1.* notwithstanding, I should rather thinke that this sentēce is drawn frō the cōmon doctrine of Scripture, as if he had said, The Lord euery where promiseth in the scriptures, that he wil neuer faile vs. Of this promise he concludes that which is said, *Psal. 118.* to wit, that beeing assured of the help of God, wee are sufficiently prouided of meanes to ouercome all feare. Now here he plucks vp the disease by the rootes, which we also ought to doe, if we meane that mens mindes should be thoroughly purged. It is certaine that distrust is the roote of all couetousnesse. For he that shall once imprint this in his minde, that God will neuer forsake him, will neuer be overwhelmed with immoderate cares, because he will still depend vpon his prouidence. The Apostle therefore dealeth wisely, who minding to purge our hearts from the sinne of couetousnes, brings vs to the promises of God; wherein he protests, that he will be with vs, and wil assist vs.

*Distrust the
roote of all co-
uetousnesse.*

Afterwards he gathers from hence, that we haue *no cause of feare*, in regard *we haue such an helper*. For by this meanes it will come to passe that we shall not be solicited nor moued with any froward lusts, because faith onely quiets mens spirits, which otherwise (as we too well know) are in great penſiuenes, and vnquietnes.

Verf. 6.

7 Remember them which haue the oversight of you, which haue declared vnto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering what hath beene the end of their conuersation.

8 Iesus Christ yesterday, and to day, the same also is for ever.

9 Be not carried about with diuers and strange doctrines: for it is a good thing that the heart be stablished with grace, and not with meates, which haue not profited them that haue bin occupied therein.

Remem

Verf. 7.

Remember them, &c.] The things which follow doe not appertaine so much to manners, as to doctrine. In the first place hee sets the example of those before the Iewes of whom they had been taught: and peradventure he speakes particularly of those which had sealed the doctrine which they had taught with their owne blood. For he noteth out something worthie of remembrance, when he saith, *Consider What hath been the end of their cōuersation.* And yet this is no impediment why wee may not also vnderstand it generally of those which haue continued in the true faith vnto the end; who also haue given faithfull testimonie to the wholesome doctrine, both in their death, as also in the whole course of their life. Now this is a matter of no small consequence, when he sets their Teachers before them to follow. For wee ought to esteeme them as fathers which haue begotten vs in Christ. Had they seene their Leaders constant and stable then, partly in the midst of cruell persecutions, and partly in the midst of diuers fights? So much the rather ought they in all reason to be the more willing to follow their steps.

Verf. 8.

All knowledge is but meere vanitie that is separate from the knowledge of Christ.

Jesus Christ yesterday, &c.] The onely meanes which causeth vs to perseuere in the true faith is, if we keepe the foundation, not recoyling backe from it so much as an haire bredth. For his knowledge is but meere vanitie that knowes not Christ, yea although hee should therewith comprehend both heaven and earth. For all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in him, Coloss. 3. 3. Here therefore wee haue an excellent place, out of which wee learne that there is none other rule of true knowledge, but to rest all our senses in Christ alone. Moreouer, because the Apostle had to deale with the Iewes, he sheweth that Christ hath alwaies held the same principalitie which he now holds at this day: and that he shall be alwaies like vnto himselfe euen to the end of the world. He was *yesterday* (saith he) *and to day, he is also the same for ever.* By these words he signifies, that the same Christ which hath been now manifested in the world, hath reigned from the beginning of the world: and that it is

is not lawfull to goe any further, being once come to him. Yesterday then comprehends all the time of the old Testament: and to the end they should not looke for some sudden change afterwards, because the publishing of the Gospel was yet but newly begun, he saith that Christ was so reuealed newly vnto them, that the same knowledge of him should not fade, but endure for euer. By this it appears that the Apostle disputes not about the eternall essence of Christ, but of his knowledge, which had place among the faithfull in all times, and who hath bin the perpetuall foundation of the Church. It is very certaine that Christ was, before hee manifested his power: but the question is now, what it is which the Apostle here entreates of. And therefore I say, that in this speech he aimes at the qualitie (as you would say) and not at the essence. For here is no disputing whether Christ be eternall with his Father or no, but what his knowledge hath been amongst men. Furthermore, the manifestation of Christ vnder the Law was otherwise, in regard of the outward manner and meanes, than at this day: yet that hinders not, but the Apostle very fitly, and properly saith, that it is alwaies one selfesame Christ to whom the faithfull looked and aimed at.

Be not carried about, &c. He gathers that we ought not to Verf. 9.
 flote hither and thither, seeing the truth of Christ is sure and
 stable; in which also wee ought to rest. For out of question *The cause of*
 the cause of the diuersitie of opinions; of all sorts of super- *superstitions,*
 stitions; of all monstrous errors; in a word, of all corrup- *errors, and*
 tions of true religion, ariseth from hence, that men doe not *corruptions in*
 rest themselues wholly in Christ alone. For that which Saint *religion.*
Paul teacheth is not in vaine, to wit, that Christ is made vn-
 to vs of God wisdom, 1. Cor. 1. 30. The summe then of the
 place is, that we must rest in Christ alone, if we will embrace
 the grounded truth of God. From whence wee gather that
 all those who are ignorant of Christ, are laid open to all the
 bewitchings of Satan: because that out of him there is no
 stabilitie of faith, but contrariwise innumerable tossings and
 turnings. The Papists then shewed themselues marueilous
 Y. sharpe:

sharp witted, when they found out a remedie contrarie vnto this, whereby to repell errors: to wit, that the light and knowledge of Christ should bee cleane put out and buried. But let vs in Gods name hold this admonition of the holie Ghost fast imprinted in our hearts; that we cannot bee safe from danger, vnlesse wee cleaue close vnto Christ. Furthermore, hee calles those *diuers doctrines* which turne vs away from Christ; because there is none other simple and pure truth but his knowledge. Hee calles them *strange* also, because God acknowledgeth nothing for his that is out of Christ. And hereby also wee are admonished whereat wee must aime, if wee meane to profit in the holy Scriptures as we ought. For he which leuels not directly at Christ, mislieth his marke. The Apostle also signifieth, that the Church shall alwaies haue to fight against strange doctrines: and that she hath none other weapons to defend her selfe withall, but by being furnished with the pure knowledge of Christ.

*What marke
we must aime
at if we meane
to profit in the
holy Scriptures.*

For it is good that the heart be established with grace, &c.]
Now he descends from a generall principle to a speciall. It is sufficiently knowne that there was a very common superstition receiued among the Iewes about the difference of meates. By occasion whereof there grew many strifes, and dissentions. Now this was one of the *strange doctrines*, because it came through want of y^e right knowledge of Christ. After the Apostle then hath grounded our faith in Christ, he saith that the obseruation of meates belongs not to the substance of our saluation, neither yet to true sanctification. When he opposeth *grace, to meates*, I doubt not but he thereby meanes the spirituall seruice of God, and regeneration.

*The obserua-
tion of meates
belongs neither
to the substance
of our salua-
tion, nor to our
sanctification.*

He puts *the establishing of the heart*: alluding to the former words, *carried hither and thither*: as if he should say, It is the spirituall grace of God which shall confirme vs in the truth, and not the obseruation of meates. As touching that which followeth, *that meates haue not profited them that haue been exercised therein*: it is vncertaine to whom he refers it.

For

For to say the very truth, these exercises were profitable vnto the ancient Fathers who liued vnder the Law; whereof this difference of meates was a part. It seemes then that this is meant rather of the superstitious, who notwithstanding they had receiued the reuelation of the Gospell, did yet busie themselues without cause in the obseruation of the ancient ceremonies. And yet if it should be rightly expounded of the ancient Fathers, wee shall finde no absurditie in it. True it is, it was profitable for them that they bare the yoke which God had laid vpon them, as also that they were held in obedience vnder the common discipline of the faithfull, and of the whole Church: but the Apostles meaning is, that abstinence from meates in it selfe is vnprofitable. For what was in it worthie of estimation, ylesse in as much as it was a rudiment for the time belonging to outward gouernment, onely whilest the faithfull were in their infancie? *To be occupied in meates*, is taken to haue respect of meates; so as to put difference betweene cleane and vncleane. And besides, wee may extend that which he saith of *meates*, to other ceremonies of the Law.

10 *We haue an Altar, whereof they haue no authoritie to eate which serue in the Tabernacle.*

11 *For the bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the holy place by the high Priest for sinne, are burnt without the campe.*

12 *Therefore euen Iesus, that he might sanctifie the people, with his owne blood, suffered without the gate.*

13 *Let vs goe forth to him therefore out of the campe, bearing his reproch.*

14 *For here haue we no continuing citie: but we seeke one to come.*

15 *Let vs therefore by him offer the sacrifice of praise alwaies to God, that is, the fruite of the lippes, which confesse his name.*

WE haue an Altar, &c.] This is an elegant application, by which hee brings and applies the ancient ceremony,

Verf. 100

ceremony of the Law to the present estate of the Church. There was a speciall kinde of solemne sacrifice, whereof mention is made in the 16. chapter of Leuiticus, whereof the Priests and Leuites had no part. Hee now shewes here by a fit allusion, that this is accomplished in Christ, because he was offered vpon this condition, that those who serued in the Tabernacle should not eate of it. Now by those *who serued in the Tabernacle*, he meanes all them who addict themselues to ceremonies. Thus he teacheth that if wee will communicate with Christ, wee must renounce the Tabernacle. For euen as this word *Altar*, comprehends the offering and the thing sacrificed; so also this word *Tabernacle* comprehends vnder it all the externall figures which were conioyned with the Tabernacle. The sense of the place then is this, that we are not to marueile if the ancient ceremonies of the Law doe now cease. For this was figured in the sacrifice which the Leuites carried out of the host to be burned there, Leuit. 16. 27. to wit, because that euen as the Ministers of the Tabernacle did eate nothing at all of it: so also if we serue in the Tabernacle, that is to say, if we yet retaine the ceremonies thereof, we shall not participate of this sacrifice which Christ hath once offered, nor of the satisfaction which hee hath once accomplished by his blood. For he carried his blood into the heauenly Sanctuarie: to the end he might doe away the sinnes of the world.

Verf. 13.

Let vs goe forth to him, &c.] To the end the Allegorie which he brought before, or the similitude taken vpon a deriuation of the ancient ceremonie of the law, might not seeme to be farre fetched, he addes a good, and a necessarie exercise which is required of all Christians. And this order and manner of teaching *S. Paul* also is wont to keepe: to wit, he shewes the faithfull wherein God would haue them exercised, when he endeouours to turne them from those ceremonies, which are now become friuolous. As if he should say, This is it that God requires of you, and not that wherein you trauaile for nothing. The very same course doth the Apostle now take. For when he calleth vs to follow Christ, hauing

hauing left the Tabernacle: what doeth he else but admonish vs that there is another manner of matter required at our hands, than to say that we serue God in the shadow, that is to say, at our ease, and without paine, vnder the glittering magnificence of the Temple: because we must march further, and must follow our vocation through flights, banishments, iniuries, afflictions, slaunders, reproaches, and through all manner of incombrances? The Apostle then sets this condition of fighting, in which we must labour & swear vnto blood, as opposite against those exercises which consisted in shadowes, in the meditation whereof, these masters of ceremonies onely boasted.

For here haue we no continuing, &c.] He extendes that *going forth* whereof he made mention yet further: to wit, that we thinke with our selues that we are as strâgers, & wanderers in this world, and that our onely place of rest waiteth for vs in heauen. Thus then, as often as we are either driuen out of any place, or that any change befallles vs, let vs meditate of that which the Apostle here teacheth: to wit, that we haue no certaine abiding vpon the earth, because heauen is our home, and inheritance. And the more we are exercised, the more let vs alwaies prepare our selues euen to the last *going forth*. For those who liue too much at their ease, and in rest, doe for the most part dreame of a neast here. And therefore seeing we are inclined to such carelesnesse and securitie, it is profitable for vs to be tossed and led often hither & thither, to the ende we may learne to direct our cies to heauen, which otherwise are too much inclined to the earth.

Let vs therefore by him, &c.] Hee returnes to that speciall doctrine, which he touched before, to wit, of the auncient ceremonies abolished. Now he preuents that which might be objected to the contrary. For seeing the sacrifices are inferiour to the Tabernacle, as things depending vpon it, it followes that the Tabernacle beeing abolished, the sacrifices also doe cease; and are abolished. Now the Apostle hath shewed, that in as much as Christ hath suffered without the gate, we also are called thither: and for this cause, those who minde to follow him, ought to forsake the Tabernacle.

Y 3

Herevpon

Verf. 14.

A meditation
for the exiled.

Iob. 29. 18.
Psal. 30. 6. 7.

Verf. 15.

Obiection.**Answer.**

*The cheifest
sacrifice that
God delights
in, is to giue
him thanks for
his goodnesse.*

hereupon some might object, to wit, Doe there now remaine no more sacrifices vnto Christians? for this would haue seemed absurd, seeing they were ordained as outward testimonies of Gods seruice. The Apostle preuents this objection betimes, and saith, that there is another forme of sacrifices left vnto vs, which is no lesse pleasing and acceptable vnto God: to wit, that we offer him the *calues of our lips*, as the Prophet Oseas saith, chap. 14. 3. and besides it clearely appeares by the 50. psalme, that the sacrifice of praise is not onely as acceptable vnto God, but also of much greater estimation before him, than all externall sacrifices, which were vsed vnder the law. For God reiecting all sacrifices as vnprofitable; commands them to offer vnto him the sacrifice of praise. Wee see then that the most excellent sacrifice, and seruice that we can present vnto God, which also for good cause ought to be preferred before all other exercises whatsoeuer, is this, when we magnifie Gods goodnesse with giuing him thanks and praise. This is (I say) that manner of sacrificing, which God now allowes and accepts of. Yet it is not to be doubted, but that vnder this one part, the inuocation of Gods name is here also comprehended. For we cannot giue him thanks vnlesse we haue first of all bin heard of him. He that praies not then, obtaines nothing. To be short, he signifies that we haue wherewithall to offer sacrifices vnto God, without brute beasts; as also that hereby he is honoured, and serued of vs perfectly, according to his will.

*No sacrifice
acceptable vn-
to God, but in
Christ.*

Moreouer, as it is the Apostles meaning to shew vs what the lawfull manner of seruing of God is vnder the new Testament: so also he admonisheth vs by the way, that we cannot call vpon God purely, and glorifie his name, but by the Mediatour *Iesus Christ*. For it is *he* onely that sanctifieth our lippes (which are otherwise polluted) to the ende we may sing praises acceptably vnto God: it is he that giues entrance to our praiers. In a word, it is *he* which performes the Priests office, to present himselfe before the face of God in our name.

16 To doe good, and to distribute forget not: for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

17 Obey them that haue the oversight of you, and submit your selves: for they watch for your soules, as they that must giue accounts, that they may doe it with ioy, and not with griepe: for that is unprofitable for you.

18 Pray for vs: for we are assured that we haue a good conscience in all things, desiring to liue honestly.

19 And I desire you somewhat the more earnestly that yee so doe, that I may be restored to you the more quickly.

TO doe good, &c.] Hee shewes here yet another way by which we may rightly and duely offer sacrifice; to wit, that all duties of charitie are so many sacrifices. By which word he signifies, that those who thinke they want something vlesse they haue beasts to present vnto God, according to the law, are foolishly couetous, and know not what it is which they aske; seeing God is pleased to furnish vs with so large and abundant matter to offer sacrifice. For although he cannot be made the richer by vs, yet notwithstanding he esteemes the inuocation of his name for a sacrifice, yea for a sacrifice so excellent, that it alone is sufficient for all. Moreouer, he auoweth all the pleasures and freindly good turnes which we doe to men, as done vnto himselfe, and names them with this honourable title of *sacrifices*, to the end we might know that the rudiments of the lawe are not onely superfluous, but also hurtfull, seeing they turne & withdraw vs from the true rule and vse of sacrificing. His speech in summe is this, that if we will offer sacrifices to God, we must call vpon his name, and shew forth his goodness with giuing of thanks: next, that we must doe good to our brethren: & that these are the true sacrifices wherein Christians ought to imploy themselves: and as for other manner of sacrifices, their time is now past, neither haue they any more place. And when he saith, that *with such sacrifices God is pleased*, there is a secret antithesis therein, to wit, that he requires not those auncient sacrifices now, the which

Verf. 16.

1

2

Three kinds of sacrifices.

he had onely commanded till the abolishment of the law.

Besides there is also an exhortation ioyned with this doctrine, which ought marueilously to prouoke vs to exercise the duties of loue to our neighbours. For it is no small honour when he accounts the good which we doe to men for sacrifices offered to himselfe: and that he so greatly deckes and adorne the good turnes and seruices that we haue done (which yet are scarce worth the naming) as to pronounce them to be sacred and holy things. Wherefore, when we suffer loue to grow cold amongst vs, we not onely thereby defraud men of their right, but also euen God himselfe: who by a solemne title hath consecrated all the good which he commands vs to doe vnto men, to himselfe. The word *communication* extendes it selfe further than beneficence, which is the shewing of mercie. For it comprehends all the pleasures and seruices which men doe one to another. And this is the true badge of loue, to wit, when those who are knit together by the band of Gods spirit, doe communicate of their good things one to another.

*The true badge
of loue.*

Verf. 17.

Obey your leaders.] I doubt not but he speakes of the Pastors and other Gouvernours of the Church. For there were then no Christian Magistrates: and where he saith, that they *watch for your soules*, it properly appertaines to the spirituall gouernment. In the first place he commands them to yeeld obedience: in the next place, honour. These two things are necessarily required: first, that the people beleue the doctrine which their pastors teach: secondly, that they reuerence them. But withall we must obserue that the Apostle speakes onely of those who exercise their office faithfully. For those that haue nothing but the bare title, and (which is worse) doe abuse this title of Pastor to destroy the Church, such deserue no great reuerence; least of all, that credit should be giuen vnto them, or that one should beleue them. The Apostle doth very apparantly expresse this, when he saith, that they *watch for your soules*: which only appertaines vnto those who doe faithfully execute their office; who are Pastors indeede, according as their name signifies. The Papists, then

1
2

then are twice sottish, to goe about to confirme the tyranny of their Idol the Pope from this place. The h.ghost comāds that we receiue the doctrine of the faithfull Christiā Bishops & Pastors with all obedience; & to obey their good & holy counsels. And it is his will also that we reuerence, and honour them. But what fauour or allowance doth this giue to these which are but Bishops onely in shewe? And yet notwithstanding all those which are called Bishops vnder the Papacie are not onely such, but are also cruell butchers of mens soules, and enraged Woolfes.

But leauing to tell what they are, I will onely say this for the present; that when commandement is giuen vs to submit our selues to our Pastors, we ought diligently and prudently to discerne who they be that are the true and faithfull leaders. For if we beare this honour, and reuerence, indifferently to all those that are in this office, first we shall doe iniurie to the good: secondly, the reason which he here addes, shall not be practised; to wit, that they are worthy of honour, because they *watch for our soules*. Wherefore if the Pope and all his followers will indeed helpe themselves with this testimonie of holy scripture, it is necessarily required of them aboue all things, that they prooue themselves to be of the number of them which watch for our saluation. If they make this plaine and euident vnto vs, there will the be no let or impediment which should hinder the faithfull to giue honour, and reuerence vnto them.

They watch for your soules. He signifies that by how much the greater their charge is, by so much the more are they worthy of honour. For the more any shall take paines for vs, and imploy himselfe with greater danger and difficulties for our good; so much the more also should we acknowledge our selues bound vnto such a one. But such is the charge of the Bishops, that it carrieth with it, and in it marueilous encombrances; besides the extreame danger to which it lieth open. If we will then acknowledge the good which they doe vs, shall we be vnwilling to yeeld them that dutie which belongs vnto them? But especially, were it

not:

*We must
learne to dis-
cerne true Pa-
stors from false*

1
2

not a great slackenesse and negligence in vs, to make none account of them, seeing they are those who must giue accounts of vs vnto God?

Morcouer, he admonisheth vs of how great estimation the profit of the thing is, which redoundeth vnto vs by their labour. For if so be the saluation of our soules be precious in our eies, then we should not esteeme basely of them, who watch for them. And the reason why he would we should be teachable and readie to obey, is to the ende that the Pastors also may doe their dutie according as the necessitie of their office requireth, *ioyfully*, and with a readie minde. For if their hearts be pent in by reason of sorrow, or greife, howsoeuer they bee otherwise good men and faithfull, yet they will waxe the more idle and carelesse, because that with the maim which they haue for want of a cheerefull heart, they will also by little and little loose their strength and courage, whereby they should be able to imploy themselves in the discharge of their duties. And therefore the Apostle tells them that this will turne to the damage and hurt of the people, if by their ingratitude they bring sorrow and heavinesse to the Pastors: to signifie vnto vs that wee cannot be vnkinde or disobedient to our Pastors, but we therewithall hazzard our own saluation.

Now seeing there is scarcely one among ten, which takes this to heart; it thereby appeares, how little account men commonly make of their own saluation. Wee are not greatly to maruell therefore, if there be so few at this day who doe carefully and diligently watch for the Church of God: for as there are not many like vnto *S. Paul*, who haue their mouthes open whilst the people stopped their eares, or who enlarge their hearts, whilst the people keepe theirs close shut: the Lord (besides all this I say) doth also punish that ingratitude, which raignes almost euery where. Wherefore as often as the Pastors waxe cold in the discharge of their duties, or begin to be lesse diligent than were expedient, let vs remember it is a iust punishment of our rebellion.

Verf. 18.

For we are assured, &c. [Hauing recommended himselfe to their

their prayers; that he might stirre them vp to doe it the more carefully, he saith that he hath a *good conscience*. For howsoeuer we ought to comprehend all men in general in our prayers, which loue indeed doth, from whence they proceed: yet notwithstanding it is requisite that we be particularly carefull of the Saints and faithfull, whose holy conuersation, or other badges of Christian vertues are known vnto vs. The end then why he speakes of the puritie of his conscience is, that he might moue the to be the more carefull of him. Whe he saith, *I am perswaded*, or, *I am assured*: this tends partly to modestie, partly to the declaration of his assurance. He addes another argument, to wit, that the prayers they shall make for him, shall not so much redound to his profit in particular, as to them all in generall. As if he should say, I looke not so much to mine owne priuate commoditie, as to the common good of you all. For it is for all your profits, that I bee *giuen vnto you*. Wee may gather from hence, that either the author of this Epistle, was at that time straitned by reason of some troublesome affaires, or withheld from them for feare of persecution; so as he could not come in his own person so soone as he would, to see them to whom he wrote.

Verf. 19.

20 *Now the God of peace that brought againe from the dead our Lord Iesus, the great shepheard of the sheepe, through the blood of the euerlasting covenant,* This 20. verse is expounded after the 21.

21 *Make you perfect in all good workes, to doe his will, working in you that which is pleasing in his sight through Iesus Christ, to whom be praise for euer and euer, Amen.*

22 *I beseech you also, brethren, suffer the words of exhortation: for I haue written vnto you in few words.*

23 *Know that our brother Timotheus is deliuered, with whom (if ye come shortly) I will see you.*

24 *Salute all them that haue the ouersight of you, and all the Saints. They of Italie salute you.*

25 *Grace be with you all, Amen.*

NOW the God of peace.] He closeth vp his Epistle with a Verf. 20. prayer, to the end hee might mutually performe that dutie:

Vers. 21.

A definition of
good workes.

dutie for them, which he required them to do for him. Now
 he desires of God to confirme them in euery good worke;
 or that he would fit, perfect, and accomplish: for the Greek
 word which he vseth emports so much. Whence we gather,
 that we shall be vnfit to do good, till such time as God hath
 fashioned and framed vs thereunto: as also that we cannot
 long continue to doe good, vnlesse he confirme and streng-
 then vs. For perseuerance is a particular gift of God. Also
 there is no doubt, but as there shined excellent gifts of the
 Spirit in them (as we haue seene) so the Apostle here wish-
 eth vnto them, not onely the first grace by which they be-
 gan; but also as a further polishing thereof, even that which
 might bring them to perfection. Besides, he here sets down
 consequently the definition of good workes, when hee ap-
 points the will of God for the rule of them. For by this
 meanes he signifies that wee ought to hold none other for
 good workes, than those which are to be referred to the will
 of God: as also S. Paul sheweth, Rom. 12.2. and in many
 other places. Let vs remember then that this is the perfe-
 ction of a good and holy life, when the same is squared to
 his obedience.

The member which by and followeth, serues for an in-
 terpretation, *Doing* (saith he) *in you, that which is pleasing in*
his sight. He had spoken of the will of God which is reuea-
 led in the law: now hee shewes that it is in vaine to bring
 ought vnto God which he hath not commanded: because
 he esteemes more of his owne ordinances, than of all good
 intents and inuentions of the world. Where he saith, *by Ie-*
sus Christ, it may bee expounded two waies, that is to wit,
Doing by Iesus Christ, or, *that which is acceptable by Iesus*
Christ. Both senses agree very well. For wee know that the
 spirit of regeneration and all other graces are conferred vn-
 to vs by the meanes of Iesus Christ. Moreouer it is certaine,
 that seeing the best things which come from vs are not
 fully perfect; therefore nothing we doe can be acceptable
 vnto God without the pardon of sinne, the which we ob-
 taine by Christ. Thus it comes to passe that our workes doe
 giue

giue a good and sweete saour before God, when they are filled with the odour of the grace of Christ: whereas otherwise they stinke and are abominable. I like well then that this be extended to both members. As touching the conclusion of his prayer, *To whom be glorie, for euer and euer*, I am content to referre it vnto Iesus Christ. Now in as much as hee attributes that here vnto Christ which belongs to God onely, he hereby giues a cleere testimonie of Christ his Diuinitie. Although if any be pleased to interpret it of the Father, I will not contend. Yet I rather take the other, because it is lesse constrained.

Who hath brought againe from the dead.] This Epithite was added for a confirmation. For he signifies that God is then rightly called vpon of vs, to bring vs to perfection: when wee know his power in the resurrection of Christ, and when we acknowledge Christ for our shepherd. In a word, he would haue vs to fixe our eyes vpon Christ, to the end we might conceiue good hope of Gods helpe and assistance. For Christ is therefore risen againe from the dead, to the end that by this very power of God we might be renewed vnto eternall life: and he is the great shepherd of all: to the end he may defend and keep the sheepe which God hath committed vnto him.

Whereas others translate, *By his blood*: there is properly in the text of the Apostle, *In his blood*: but because the letter *beth*, which in Hebrew signifies, *in*, is also taken for *with*: I thinke it better to take it here in the latter sense. For it seems to me, that the Apostles meaning is, that Christ is so risen againe frō the dead, that yet notwithstanding his death is not abolished, but holds his perpetuall vigor. As if he had said, God hath raised vp his Son, but in such wise, that the blood which he once shed in his death to confirme the eternal co-uenant, ceaseth not still to haue his efficacie, euen now after his resurrection, yea and brings forth his fruit, as if it alwaies flowed out.

I beseech you also brethren, &c.] Some take it as though he required that audience should be giuen him: but I take it otherwise.

therwise. For in my iudgement, his meaning is to say, that he hath written to them in *fewe words*, or breifly; to the ende it might not seeme he would any way diminish the ordinarie manner of teaching in the Church: notwithstanding hee speakes principally of exhortations wherein himselfe had beene more breife. Let vs learne then that the Scripture is not giuen vs to the ende the liuely voice of the Pastors should cease amongst vs, or that it should be irkesome vnto vs, although euen the words of exhortation do often sound in our earts, & shall be oftē reiterated. For the Spirit of God hath so tempered and compassed the writings which hee shewed to the Prophets and Apostles, that he meant not to derogate any thing at all from the order which himselfe hath instituted.

Now his order is this; that daiely exhortations should be heard in the Church, from the mouthes of the Pastors. Peradventure also he doth of purpose recommend the word of *exhortation* vnto them: because that men as they are naturally couetous to learne, so they had rather alwaies bee taught some new thing, than to be admonished of known things, and such as haue beene often heard. Adde also, that in as much as they are giuen to flatter themselues, and to let loose the raines to their carelesnesse; they will hardly suffer themselues without griefe and vnwillingnesse to be sharply touched, and chastised.

Verse. 23.

Know that our brother Timotheus, &c.] Because the termination of the Greeke word is ambiguous, we may translate *you know*, or, *know ye*; and this latter reading I take to be the better; although I reiect not the first. For it is very likely that he giues the Iewes to vnderstand, beeing beyond the sea; of that which yet they knew not. Moreouer, if so be this *Timotheus* be that notable companiō of S. *Paul* (which I willingly receiue) it is very likely that either S. *Luke*, or *Clement* is the author of this Epistle. S. *Paul* surely was woont rather to call him his sonne. Besides, that which he immediately adds, agreeth not to the person of S. *Paul*. For it appeares that he which wrote this Epistle was at libertie, and not imprisoned;

ned; and besides, that hee was rather somewhere els than at Rome: yea and it is very likely, that he had beene in many of the cities of this cuntry, and was readie to passe the sea. Now all these things might come to passe either to S. *Luke*, or to *Clement* after S. *Pauls* death.

Salute all them, &c. Seeing he writes this Epistle in com- Vers. 24.
mon to all the Hebrews, it is a wonder why he requires that they should by name salute some of them, as if they were separated from the rest. But in my iudgement, he directs this salutation particularly to the *Leaders*, by way of giuing honour vnto them, to the ende he might grow into acquaintance with them, and might the more mildly enduce them with good consent to entertaine the doctrine. When he ads, *And to all the Saints*: Either he meanes the faithfull which were of the Gentiles, to the ende that both Iewes and Gentiles might learne to nourish and entertaine a godly v-nion together: or he aimes at this, to wit, that they which should receiue this Epistle first, should communicate the same vnto others.

Because the 25. verse hath beene expounded in the ende of the other Epistles, therefore it is omitted here. Notwithstanding, for their sakes, who it may be, want his other commentaries, I haue thought good breifly to supply that lacke out of his commentarie vpon the Epistle to the Romans, Chap. 16. ver. 20.

Grace be with you all. This is a praier, wherein he wisheth Vers. 25.
that they may feele the fruit, and inioy al those good things which are purchased for vs by Christ.

*Immortall glorie, be to our God, the Father of
our Lord Iesus Christ, Amen.*

FINIS.

[illegible]

...of his contemporaries upon the English the Romans, ...

1871

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A TABLE DIRECTING THE READER TO

some principall matters contained in this Commentarie upon the Hebrewes: the first number points to the Chapter: the second to the verse of the Chapter.

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Z

writ-

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To teach ciuill righteousness without faith: is a prophane philosophie.	Death must needs be terrible to as many as looke vpon it out of Christ.
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The neerer Christs comming approacheth, the more should wee indeauour to bring home the straied sheepe.	Two things to be considered in Christs death.
<i>Conscience.</i>	Death is to be chosen aboue life if it cannot bee kept without forsaking of god.
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<i>Creatures.</i>	<i>Distrust.</i>
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